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PUTNAM'S HANDY-BOOK SERIES

THE HOME:

WHERE IT SHOULD BE AND WHAT TO PUT IN IT.

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BY

FRANK R. AND MARIAN STOCKTON.

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G. P. PUTNAM & SONS,
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PREFACE.

(*Which it may be well to read.*)

March

This book has been prepared more especially for those about to commence house-keeping, but will, we hope, be found not without interest and value to those of more experience.

The first portion of it, relating to the selection or building of a house, is more general in its treatment of the subject than the portions relating to the furnishing and interior arrangements. We have endeavored to write only of what housekeepers should do for themselves. In a book of this size we could not undertake to give plans of houses and architectural directions. These belong to works on building. But as the careful selection of a house, or the intelligent supervision of its construction, should be the duty of those intending to establish for themselves a satisfactory home, we have treated of these subjects.

Sept.

But, when the house is ready for occupancy, the real work of the housekeepers commence. They, themselves,

must furnish their home, and, to a very great extent, must depend upon their own judgment and good sense. To aid in this work, we have given very particular and explicit directions in regard to house-furnishing, which is mainly the purpose of this volume.

We have also devoted considerable space to various departments of domestic economy, having in view the needs not only of those of small means, but of persons of good incomes, to whom it is an object to make an economical and advantageous disposition of their money.

And, in treating of the furnishing and general arrangements of a house, we have endeavored to consider not only the ordinary subjects of convenience, expense, etc., but those of beauty, and artistic effect. And with these economy is perfectly compatible, for to make a home tasteful and attractive money is often not so necessary as study and observation, and a little earnestness in regard to the desired end.

For information in various parts of this volume we are indebted to Messrs. Kelty & Co., Edward D. Bassford, Degraaf & Taylor, Lord & Taylor, and Ball, Black & Co., of New York, and James H. Orne, Son & Co., of Philadelphia.

THE HOME.

PART I.

THE LOCATION OF THE HOME.

A COUNTRY HOME.

Under this title we will consider the homes of country people, not the country residences of persons doing business in the city. These will be treated under another head.

There is, perhaps, less opportunity of selection in regard to the location of a country house than in any other instance; for we are very apt, when we buy, or rent a farm, large or small, to give the chief consideration to the land, and to be satisfied, or to endeavor to be satisfied with the house we find upon it. This is often our only course, but it also happens, frequently enough, that a country house is to be built, and the locality of this we will consider.

If there has been a house on the farm, the new edifice is generally erected on, or near, the location on which the old one stood, for there are all the conveniences and outside belongings of the dwelling. If, then, these conveniences are to be considered of the first import-

ance there is nothing more to be said about the location. But we do not subscribe to the doctrine of the domination of convenience which governs so many country builders. We would place the requisites for a good location of a country home in the following order: healthfulness, comfort, convenience. Therefore, in the first place, the house should be on a portion of the land where good drainage is possible; it should be well shaded, but not too much so; and its situation should be as convenient as possible in respect to water, access to farm buildings, the road, and the fields.

This matter of a healthful location is too often entirely neglected in building country houses. A low, damp locality is attractive because it is better sheltered from the winds of winter; water is more readily obtained; the kitchen garden may be of better soil; and, if there is danger of chills and fever, and of rheumatism, these are dangers to which country people have been so long familiar that they have become tired of being prudent. But we might as well live as long and as happily as we can, and, if there is a choice of location, let us build on that which is most healthful, unless circumstances compel us, as they unfortunately sometimes will, to do otherwise.

There is nothing which conduces so much to the comfort of a country house as the shade and protection afforded by trees, and yet bare houses are as common on a farm as bare feet. Very often the first thing done after the site for the house is selected is to cut down all the trees thereon. Absolute barbarity is often displayed in such cases, when grand trees of years of magnificent growth are sacrificed to the mere convenience of a carpenter or mason. There are few things about which we

should hesitate so long as the felling of a fine tree near the future homestead.

To be sure, roots and branches are often great hindrances to cellar-digging, and house-building, and it is so easy to set out young trees! This is true, but it is not always easy to live until those trees have grown to their full size and use. It is well for a place to be pleasant for our children, but it is better to have it pleasant also for ourselves. So, if possible, have trees about your house, or go a little out of your way to find a place where there are trees; oaks, maples, etc., for shade, and cedars and other evergreens for protection against the blasts of winter.

In regard to the convenience of a situation it is not necessary to say much. The country builder is always ready enough to consider this branch of the subject. But it is better to depend for water on a hydraulic ram or a pipe from a distant spring than to sacrifice comfort and health to a well at the back door. And we earnestly advise the country builder to consider that he is a man as well as a farmer—that the health and happiness of his family are worth as much at least as the possible profit from placing the barn on the side of a convenient rise in the ground, and the house wherever it may be most convenient to the stables and the pig pen.

We will be glad to see the day when the barn becomes the auxiliary of the dwelling; when the family is considered first, and the cattle afterward.

To many parts of our country these remarks do not apply. The homestead there is on the finest situation on the farm, and the necessary buildings cluster around as they are needed. But in many localities the magnificent barns and the poor, make-shift dwellings make us long

for a change in that rural sentiment which sets the comfort and well-being of a horse or a cow over that of their human owners.

A SUBURBAN HOME.

This is a general term to designate the dwellings of those who do business in the city, but who live outside of the business limits.

In the first place, as in the former instance, we ought to think of health. Around many cities, great care is necessary to avoid what are called the chill and fever districts. Ill-drained locations; sites near or on new-made ground, or filled-in marshes; must be avoided if you wish to remain on distant terms with that unpleasant acquaintance—the fever and ague. It will not do to depend on inquiries of property holders, or even of the residents of the neighborhood. No matter where you may go you will find that people who have lands to sell are nearly always very favorably impressed with the superior healthfulness of their property. Close and careful investigation will alone disclose the truth. And it is possible to discover it without living on the spot to find out by actual experiment whether you will be sick or not. The investigation may be troublesome, but it will repay all the money or time you spend upon it.

Then, if you intend to buy or build your house the value of land ought to be considered; not only the price at the time but the possible rise and decrease in such price. There are building sites in and around New York which to-day are not worth the money that was paid for them several years ago, and there are, as every one knows, lots that have doubled and trebled in value in the same time. The improving tendencies of

a neighborhood, and the probability of increased accessibility to the business centres, will be considered by every man of ordinary judgment, but it is so easy to be misled in these regards that great prudence, united to a spirit of investigation, is always needed. The representations of agents and owners are almost always apt to show an unnaturally bright side of the picture. It must be toned down by good, hard common sense before you can look at it properly.

Taxes, and probable assessments for improvements, opening streets, etc., always exercise a very powerful influence upon the value of a lot to a man in moderate circumstances. To the rich, the fact that he is obliged to help pay for the opening of a street through the property need matter little, for the expense is likely to be repaid to him two or three fold in the course of time, but it is widely different in the case of a man in moderate circumstances. The hundred dollars which he is required to pay to-day may be worth far more to him than the three or four hundred dollars of increased value that may accrue upon his land in consequence of that expenditure may be worth to him in a few years. The expenses which tell the heaviest upon a young man's prosperity are very often those which beset him at the commencement of his business career; and this fact should be kept in view when seductive pictures of prospective advantages are held before him. It is well to provide for the future, but, if possible, let it be without too great a sacrifice of the present. To be truly prosperous one ought to be *proportionately* prosperous all the time.

Thus much in regard to privations and embarrass-

ments consequent upon drains upon the dimes of to-day in hopes of additions to the dollars to-morrow.

It is generally true, however, that the greater number of those who live in small suburban houses rent their dwellings, and for these, if they secure a tolerably long lease of the premises, it is not necessary to consider the probable rise and fall of the value of the property. If the house be taken from year to year an unexpected increase in rent may make itself unpleasantly felt by the tenant without the possibility of any compensating advantage to him, and a prudent man will therefore endeavor to secure a lease upon a property in which he desires to establish a home. In such cases he not only makes, with some certainty, his calculations as to his expenses for a few years, but he will feel much more strongly encouraged to make improvements in house and grounds. Too many tenants endure privations and inconveniences, little and great, because they think it is hardly worth while to spend money or labor in improvements which, after all, may only be for the benefit of the next tenant. But, with a lease, one may plant with some certainty that he shall reap, and not another.

Apart from the question of the value of the property, as many things must be taken into consideration in regard to the rented house as one that is purchased. In both cases the house is to be lived in, and the tenant would like to be as happy in his home as if he were its owner. Consequently questions of location, convenience, access, etc., should be considered by the tenant as well as the house-owner.

As a rule, rents in the suburbs are not high in proportion to the prices necessary to pay for portions of

houses in the cities. The price of rents depends somewhat, although not as much as circumstances would seem to demand, upon the means of access from the city to the suburb. In many cases rents are quite as cheap when one can travel to and fro in a commodious steamboat, or in the steam cars, as on those long and wearisome lines of horse cars, which now run out of almost all our large cities.

It is probable that in a few years most of these cities will have improved methods of transit to and from the suburbs and outlying country, but, until then, we would urge those who care for comfort, health, and a tranquil mind, to avoid the necessity of connecting their homes and their business by means of the horse cars. Especially in the summer they may be considered as the seed beds of much of the disease of the cities. The extra money paid on the railroad or steamboat will often be much less than the doctor's bills which have their foundation in the packed boxes on wheels that ply up and down the length and breadth of our great cities.

Not only, then, should the time needed to reach your home be considered, but the means of reaching it should be carefully pondered, before making up your mind in regard to its location.

The same remark would apply to the selection of apartments were it not that these are almost always within the city limits, where horse cars are the only means of reaching them. The evil, therefore, must be borne in these instances, if the distance is too great for the reserved power of one's legs.

PART II.

THE HOUSE FOR THE HOME.

THINGS TO BE CONSIDERED.

The man who is enabled to build himself a house ought to be in this regard a happy man, but it does not always happen that he is such. If he fail to avail himself of his opportunities, and finds it out, the sense of the "might have been" will be very depressing. He is in far more unhappy case than the man who takes up his abode in a house all ready to his hand, and who contents himself, of necessity, with things as he finds them.

Therefore, let us think a little before we build, and, as far as possible, govern circumstances rather than submit to them. We have great privileges. Let us not allow them to slip away.

It is not the intent of this volume to give directions for putting up a house, or to inform any one of the best methods of making windows or doors, or the most desirable plans for roofs and stairways. The way to have a good house is to get good men to build it—men who understand their business, whether the building is to be of logs or brown-stone. But we may be permitted to tell the builders what we want, and it is then their duty to give it to us.

And here we will remark that one of the best advisers in regard to the planning of a house is a man's wife—the woman who is to be the mistress of the establishment. She it is who will make the greatest use of the closets, the stairs, the rooms, the cellars, the garrets, the kitchen, the entries, and the pantries ; and she it is who should have the most potent voice in their arrangement. If a mistake is made in regard to these things, the wife will be the greatest sufferer. Give her a chance then to prevent mistakes. Her knowledge of what is needed in house-building to make housekeeping perfect will be of great advantage in drawing out the plan.

Nearly every one has an idea of what kind of house he would like ; but there is a fashion in houses, and, when a builder comes to build, it will often be found that this fashion interferes very much with the comfort and convenience of the person who is to pay for the house and live in it. Take a stand then, and have your house as you want it, no matter how the rest of the buildings in the block or neighborhood may be constructed. If you prefer to sacrifice comfort to appearance and uniformity that is your own affair ; but if you want to have a house that will be convenient and sensible, let your builder know that you intend to have it. This may necessitate a struggle, but a good house is worth struggling for.

To begin then, insist, when you are consulting about your plans, (and these remarks will apply to all houses, whether they cost but a thousand or two, or tens of thousands,) upon plenty of light and ventilation. It is on these fields that your principal battles will be fought. The builder will not object to light and air in

the abstract ; but, if narrow windows are the style, he will want to put them in ; if open fire-places are not included in his private plans, he will want to leave them out ; and, if he is in the habit of putting up half a story at the top of his houses, he will want to put it on yours. But stand up for your own ideas in these respects. If he is not a man to whom you feel you can defer in regard to the execution of the plans, it will be better to drop him at once, for you are, in a great degree, responsible to yourself and family for the suitableness of the plan.

There is no reason why there should be so many badly built houses. It seldom costs more to put up a well-arranged house than one which is unhealthful and inconvenient. Why, for instance, should we not have good, high rooms at the top of the house? A few more rows of bricks, or a little more framework, windows a little higher, and a trifle more plastering, and we have rooms instead of cubby-holes. Nothing to us seems to indicate more plainly a badly-planned house than little hot rooms with low ceilings and contracted windows at the top of a house. The comparatively small amount of money necessary to make these rooms of a reasonable height, fit for the occupation of decent human beings, would be as profitably invested as that expended upon any other portion of the house. But it is not generally the want of money that prompts the building of these low, uncomfortable rooms—it is the want of judgment.

Water in the house is such an immense advantage that it is included in all good plans wherever circumstances will permit. If there is a running stream near the house, a hydraulic ram may be constructed which will force the water all over the house ; but if there is

no such stream, a spring may be found at such an elevation as to allow the water to flow through pipes into the house without any mechanical system of pumping, or forcing. And, if there is nothing but a well, a system of pipes, through which the water may be occasionally pumped into the house, will be found of the greatest advantage. Then, there may be a bath-room, water in the kitchen, stationary wash tubs, and a variety of the conveniences of civilization impossible, or nearly so, when the water must be carried by hand into the house.

Even more important than bringing water into the house is that of keeping water out of it. A damp house is not fit to live in. We may make our roofs and our walls tight, and yet our houses may be like grave-yard vaults, if the proper precautions against damp walls and cellars are not taken during the process of building. In the first place the soil on which the house is built should be so drained that the foundations will rest absolutely on dry ground. Then the walls above the floor level should be separated from those below it by some substance impervious to water. Otherwise we cannot always be certain of dry walls. No drains should ever be allowed to run under a dwelling, for any drain may leak, and then disease is almost certain.

These things, apparently the duty of the builder, will often be neglected, if the owner of the house does not see for himself that they are attended to.

Again, especially if the house is in the country, the question of shade should be considered, and it may be that shade without trees must be sought for. We can plant trees where there are none, but we cannot make trees grow to be shade trees for many years. Large

forest trees are sometimes transplanted into lawns with success, but these cases are exceptional. A piazza is a matter more under our control, but it often happens that even piazzas require the growth of vines and the aid of trees before they become entirely reliable for purposes both of shelter and shade. Especially is this the case when it is possible only to have them on certain sides of the house. Piazzas are often of but partial advantage to the new house. In such cases it has been very sensibly suggested that if the piazzas be supplemented with awnings, which, at comparatively small expense, can be made to reach from the roof to posts set up four or five feet outside of the portico, a comfortable shade can be secured at all hours of the day. Broad flaps hanging from the edges of these awnings will greatly assist in keeping off the rays of the sun. A piazza thus protected is a constant comfort in the summer, in rain or sunshine.

When a home is built and furnished, we should endeavor, of course, to guard it from danger; and its greatest danger is from fire. In cities we place our reliance for safety upon the Fire Department, and upon careful management and oversight of our stoves and grates. But in the country we must generally look to ourselves, not only to prevent fires, but to extinguish them after they have broken out. And it very often happens that, when a house is built in the country, not the slightest provision is made for extinguishing fires. In fact, when a country residence takes fire, it generally burns down; and the efforts of its occupants and the neighbors are confined to saving the furniture and valuables. It seems almost incredible that persons of ordinary prudence will be content to invest their money

and risk their lives in a house which it may be impossible to save from destruction if a coal should fall upon the floor, if a lamp should upset, or if any of the manifold accidents should happen, which the use of fire always renders possible.

And it is the more wonderful that these precautions are not taken when we reflect how comparatively little they cost. A trifling economy in building, the giving up of a bay window, of an ornamental cornice, of an extra-handsome fence, or of many an adjunct to a building that may be dispensed with without actual discomfort or loss, may enable one to provide the means for extinguishing a fire in his house.

These means are various. If there is a well on the premises, a hose long enough to be carried from the well to the upper stories of the house with a properly arranged force pump, may be sufficient in many cases. Sometimes it may be considered best to have a cistern kept full of water for use in case of fire, or it may be preferred to build a tank in the upper part of the house, which may be kept full of rain water by means of tin spouts connecting with the roof. But, in any case, the recently invented Fire Extinguishers, which are always ready for use, and of the greatest service in case of fires, may be provided, and they may be relied upon with confidence. They will cost about sixty dollars each, and this sum can be included in the estimates of expenses without increasing the sum total, if it be considered that nothing is more important to a house than protection against fire. Do without something else, if you will, but do not do without some sort of fire apparatus.

In this connection we would also urge the necessity

of a trap-door in the roof of every country house. These are often dispensed with because they may possibly allow rain to leak in around their edges; but if they are properly made there need be no danger of this, and their use in case of a fire on the roof is incalculable. With easy access to the roof a man may extinguish with a hose, or a few buckets of water, or some wet blankets, a fire that will be entirely beyond his control by the time he has clambered up an unsafe and insufficient ladder, or has cut a hole through his roof.

It is a very prudent thing to insure ourselves against loss by fire, but it is still more prudent to have within our own hands the means of preventing such loss.

There are many other conveniences which might almost be considered necessities, if comfort is our object, which will suggest themselves to the mind of the thoughtful builder, and which will be of far more use and satisfaction, and much less cost, than many of the tawdry arrangements with which it is now fashionable to adorn the exterior of a house. It is not always money that is needed in these cases; generally it is only necessary to be convinced of the advantage of such adjuncts to a pleasant home. The mind that is satisfied of their value will seldom find insurmountable difficulties in the way of their attainment.

With these remarks, which are intended merely to call attention to some of the points desirable in a good house, be it grand or humble, and which are generally within the means of persons in moderate circumstances, we leave the subject of building.

The person who rents a house is, of course, in a great degree the victim of circumstances, but the foregoing remarks will apply to him in many instances. If he

cannot build, it may be that he can alter, and, if he has a lease upon the premises, it may pay him admirably to make improvements on the place, such as we have suggested, even if he is obliged to leave them behind him when he changes his residence. Three or four years of comfort are not to be undervalued by beings whose earthly existence is so limited as ours.

SEVERAL HOMES IN ONE HOUSE.

The system of two or more families residing in one house, which has long been quite common in Europe, has been adopted of late years in some of our large cities, particularly in New York, where rents have recently been very high. In some cities, such as Philadelphia, where there are so many small, convenient houses, at reasonable rents, a family of moderate means can readily have a dwelling to itself, and there the idea of several families living in one house is received with great disfavor. But in New York it is almost impossible for any one to rent a whole house who does not possess a handsome income, and therefore it is often absolutely necessary to be content with a part of one. In many cases, provided the families are congenial, and the dwelling will admit of separate household arrangements, the joint occupants of a house live together with much comfort and harmony : but to persons unaccustomed to the plan it is often a long time before a part of a house will possess the cherished characteristics of a home. But familiarity not only breeds contempt, but content ; and when we come to the co-partnership system, and find that so many respectable people besides ourselves have adopted it, we

become reconciled to the plan, and consider our part of the house our home as much as if we occupied the whole of it.

There is a system of building houses, arranged in flats according to the French method, where every floor is a dwelling by itself, with all the modern conveniences, and where the different tenants are as private as persons living in separate houses on the same street, which will, if generally adopted, go far to remove the objections to the plan of congregated households ; but at present these " flats " are generally held at such high rates that it is often almost as cheap to rent a house as one of them. It is true that they are frequently more convenient than a house would be for which the same rent is charged ; but until they are constructed in such a way that they can be had at more reasonable rents, they will not become popular with people of slender incomes.

But, if it is possible to obtain one of these flats or floors that has been constructed on the improved models, it will prove to be wonderfully convenient and satisfactory to families who must live in a house with others. Parlors, dining-rooms, bed-rooms, kitchens, and every modern improvement will be found upon the floor that is rented, and a household may be even more private than if it occupied a house with neighbors on each side of it, and on the opposite side of the street.

The French flat plan may be said to be yet in its infancy here ; but if it ever attains in our cities the perfection to which it has been brought in Europe, where it is united with various plans of coöperative household economy, it will go very far towards mitigating many

of the nuisances and reducing many of the expenses of life in a crowded metropolis.

It may be well to state to those who are not familiar with the mode of living to which we have referred, that none of our remarks apply to what are generally known as tenement houses. A French flat house and a tenement house are as different as a gentleman and a boot-black.

PART III.

FURNISHING THE HOUSE.

THE PARLOR.

The kitchen should be the first room furnished; then the dining-room; next the bedroom, and halls; and, lastly, the parlor. This is the order of importance, because eating is absolutely necessary to existence, and refreshing sleep is also necessary, while one might live to a healthy old age without a parlor. The dining-room will answer for the purpose of a parlor in cases of necessity, but this arrangement is not desirable, and is not recommended where there are means to furnish a separate room. But do not have a poorly furnished kitchen, and a meagre dining-room, or an uncomfortable bed for the sake of a parlor.

It is doubtful whether the room we are about to describe is a parlor. It certainly is not in the common acceptation of the word in America, although very applicable in its original signification. For the English word parlor comes from the French *parloir*—a name bestowed upon that room in a monastery, set apart as a reception room for visitors—and that again from the verb *parler*, to converse. And our room will inevitably become the talking-room of the house. But, in this

country the parlor is regarded as the "company-room," entirely distinct from the reception-room, corresponding with the English drawing-room, and the French *salon*, and is applied indiscriminately to the long suite of lofty, elegantly-appointed saloons of the millionnaire, and to the ten-feet-by-ten best room of the fifth story of a tenement house.

And, was there ever an American woman, who, furnishing a house, did not first lay aside the money for the parlor? A parlor there must be, even if after it there come the deluge. And, when this much-desired room is complete in all the splendors of Brussels carpeting, brocatelle, and walnut, the children must not play in it, the husband must not smoke in it, or lounge on the sofa, the sunshine must never look in, even the fresh air is unwelcome, because the open windows usher in the flies, and a fly buzzing about that immaculate room would inspire as much horror as the advent of a chattering girl of seventeen into a La Trappe monastery. When such a room is opened on company occasions the dampness strikes to the bones of the guests, while the touch-me-not cleanliness, and frigid dignity of the grand furniture settle on their spirits with the weight of lead. In country places it often happens that this room is not used half-a-dozen times a year, and, meanwhile, the family room, where all the familiar talk is held, where the children and grown-up people assemble around the evening lamp, and where the minds of the former receive deeper impressions than in all other places, is the kitchen, or dining-room, or possibly some barely-furnished sitting-room, suggestive of nothing but discomfort and ugliness.

It need not be inferred from these remarks that we

consider a private family sitting-room an undesirable thing. It is always a comfort where there is money sufficient for furnishing several rooms, and is useful for a withdrawing room when company becomes a weariness, and also as a general work-room; but still let the parlor be the family room, and if you have a sitting-room, let it be a prettily furnished and attractive apartment, and not a poverty-stricken make-shift. This kind of room is almost a necessity where a family is large, and entertains much company, for it is not to be expected that every member of a large family will always have the time or inclination to entertain visitors, and out of a wide circle of acquaintances there is only a select few that we care to admit to the family retreat. But we do protest against taking the lion's share of the funds set apart for furnishing to adorn a room intended *only* for "company."

The room which we are about to describe is good enough for a parlor, and not too good for a sitting-room. We reverse the order of furnishing rooms that we recommended in the opening paragraph, beginning our descriptions with the apartment of greatest dignity, because thus we will avoid some repetitions that would otherwise be unavoidable.

Let us commence with the ceiling. It is to be hoped, for the sake of comfort, as well as of beauty, that this is high, but if, unfortunately, it should be low, do not have it of a dark tint. White is most generally used, because it looks well with all kinds of wall papers, but it is not always desirable. A delicate pink, or buff, throws down a more agreeable and softer light on bright days, if the paper hangings will allow these tints to be used. If the ceiling is high it may have a

little deeper tinge, if desired—rose or maize color—but even here care should be taken that it is not dark in effect. The ceiling should always be lighter than the walls.

In regard to wall coverings, paper hangings are the most popular, and are used everywhere. Even the rough interiors of log cabins in the far West are often covered with illustrated newspapers, thus economically combining paper hangings and pictures. There is, we think, no style of wall paper to be compared as to beauty with the plain-tint paper. The effect is fine, and yet unobtrusive ; it does not dwarf the size of a room as pattern paper often does ; on it pictures show to good advantage ; it corresponds with any style of furnishing ; and it is always in fashion—or, rather, it never looks *bizarre*, no matter what particular fashion may happen to be popular. There is a prevailing opinion that it soils easily, but this is a mistake ; it will keep clean as long as any paper.

There is a style, forty inches wide, beautifully finished, with a fine soft gloss that gives the wall the appearance of being painted. This sells at a dollar a piece. There are other styles, both glazed and unglazed, some very pretty and of excellent quality for sixty cents a piece.

It is not the fashion now to have an unbroken surface of wall from the ceiling to the base-board. We are, in many matters, returning to old methods, having discovered that our ancestors were not quite devoid of taste, and, among other things, have adopted the wainscotings that were their pride. And, in rooms that are not wainscoted, we also follow their fashion in a like case, and put around the wall, about three feet above

the floor, a moulding called a chair-rail. This serves the double purpose of breaking up the blank uniformity of much space with the same coloring, and of protecting the walls from being scratched and rubbed by the furniture.

This moulding can be used very effectively with the plain tint paper by having a dark tint below it, and a lighter one above; a rich yellow-brown below, and cream color or amber above the chair-rail; or a heavy purple-grey below, and a light stone color above; and other combinations may be made with finer effects than these suggested, by considering the situation of the room in regard to sunshine, and various other matters. These plain-tint papers should have a rather narrow border, with rich, bright colors (something in the style of the arabesque or scroll patterns is most desirable) on very dark grounds, black generally being the handsomest. A narrow gilt bead border for an edging, between the paper and bordering, will be a very pretty addition.

The moulding for the chair-rail should be tacked on where the two papers are joined. Moulding is sold expressly for this purpose, but something suitable can be bought from any cabinet-maker or carpenter for five or six cents a yard for common pine, and ten and twelve cents for finer woods. The former presents a very handsome appearance when stained with black walnut stain.

The narrow gilt bead bordering is eight to twelve cents a yard, and the rich bordering, described above, from ten to twenty cents; but a perfectly plain bordering, in rich dark colors, very suitable for this style of papering, can be purchased for five cents a yard.

But this plain tint for wall hangings is a matter of individual taste, and, if you prefer a figured paper, get a small, cheerful pattern on a very light ground for a room that does not enjoy much sunshine. And it is best to get rather a light paper where the room is sunny, for in winter the brightness is no objection, and in summer the room is kept partially darkened during the heat of the day. Decided greens and blues are very trying to the complexion. A very pretty style of figured paper is all of one color in different tints. But if this is of *very* light shades, it is apt to be characterless, and gives no relief to furniture and window hangings. Stiffly designed figures, great bouquets, and wild and wandering patterns, on the other hand, possess entirely too much character. It is difficult, on the whole, to select figured paper that will altogether satisfy you after it is put on, and if you buy it solely with reference to its individual beauty, you are likely to be disappointed. You are to consider the effect of your walls *as a whole*, and not in detail; and as much taste is needed in designing them as any part of the house furnishing.

Gilded paper is inartistic, although for several years it had the sanction of fashion, and is still used to some extent. Stripes add to the apparent height of a room, but are stiff and awkward, and the eye soon wearies of them. Be careful about the greens in wall papers, for many of them are colored with poisons.

If your room has a chair-rail, the figured paper should only be used above it. The same may be said of striped paper, unless it is in imitation of wood, in which case it can be used below with good effect.

Panel-paper is formed on the walls by using plain-

tint paper in stone colors, and paneling it with narrow bordering that is made for the purpose. This is an expensive style, and is hardly suited to rooms of ordinary size ; but it is very pretty for the lower part of the wall, below the chair-rail, as a suggestion of wainscoting.

The papers sold by paper-hangers as parlor grades are from one to three dollars a piece ; but satin paper of excellent quality can be bought for fifty cents ; and we have seen very pretty walls hung with papers that only cost twenty cents a roll.

In furnishing rented houses, the papering is not usually taken into consideration, as that is the business of the landlord. But, if you find an ugly paper on your parlor walls, do not let it stay there because the landlord refuses to re-paper, when you can have it done so cheaply. There is no need that you should be tormented day after day by an unsightly object. It will be better to replace it with one of inferior quality and pretty design, than to have the pleasant family room disfigured with a leaden colored wall, or a staring, straggling pattern, or some style that is tawdry and vulgar in effect.

Our best wall papers are French importations ; but the American papers are very good ; they last well, and are made in beautiful tints and designs. The worst that can be said of them is that they are not quite equal to the French. Some of them (and pretty ones) sell as low as twelve cents a roll.

Wood hangings are much more beautiful than paper, and it is claimed that they are much more durable. Judging from the fact of their construction and their costliness, they should last a very long time ; but, being a comparatively recent invention, this point

has not yet been properly tested. They make the most beautiful wall covering next to the still more costly painting and frescoing; for the woods are not only beautiful in themselves, but in putting them on there is opportunity for the display of artistic taste in the proper selection of shades and colors, and in arranging designs for the paneling. Those who sell these hangings will send their workmen to put them up, if desired, but this is not necessary, as they are not more difficult to hang than paper.

The prices of American woods range from one dollar to one and a half per thirty-six square feet, and the foreign woods are much more costly. The latter are not much used, except in getting up very elaborate designs, where they are arranged in centre-pieces and mouldings with fine effect. But these things can only be properly done by an expert, and are too ornate for anything but very magnificent mansions. The ordinary grades sold are in American woods, cut very thin, and backed with paper, on which the paste is spread. The paste is made expressly for this purpose, and sold with the wood. The paneling, made of very narrow strips of wood, is three or four cents a yard, and is tacked to the wall.

Hangings of curled or bird's-eye maple, with panelings, and cornice of walnut, would be pretty for a parlor; chestnut and butternut for a dining-room; and oak and walnut for halls and libraries. Walnut hangings should be used only in very large rooms. These woods can also be used plain, without the panels. Some are striped, walnut and maple, chestnut and oak, etc., but woods laid in this way seem more suitable for floors than halls.

A great advantage that this wall covering possesses is that it can be washed as often as desirable without fear of injury. But, much as we admire it, we would not recommend that a whole house be hung with it at first. Better try it in one room, and see if it stands the tests of dampness, heat, and the various action of our changeful climate, for new things should be received with caution.

These hangings are yet too costly too be generally used, but may be employed with kalsomined or papered walls to imitate a wainscot with the chair-rail for the upper moulding.

The wainscoting proper costs a dollar a foot, and is three feet wide. It is made of thin wood, but much thicker than the hangings, is not backed with anything, and is tacked to the wall. It was made originally as an adjunct to the wood hangings but is now used with all styles of walls, and adds greatly to the richness and beauty of a room.

Frescoed and painted walls will retain their beauty for many years, and can be washed and kept clean. In panels and pictorial designs they are very beautiful if well executed, but are, of course, very costly. The plain tints are very desirable for ordinary dwellings, and are not very expensive. But still they are more costly than papering, and painters can only be found in cities or large towns.

After the walls are decorated to your taste, put something on them ; for bare walls, however pretty, need relief. Mirrors will at once suggest themselves. By all means get them, if you have the means. They add greatly to the handsome appearance of a parlor ; and two placed opposite, will convert an insignificant

room into quite a spacious apartment, apparently. Mantel mirrors too are beautiful in themselves, and in the effects they produce. But do not get cheap ones, for then your room will look poor and mean, in spite of all the care you may otherwise bestow upon it. Handsome mirrors are costly ornaments, and, unless you have a pretty large allowance for furnishing, you had better dismiss them from your mind for a year or two. If you have a choice between a mirror and pictures, choose the latter without hesitation. A fine painting will go much farther towards furnishing your parlor. True, the paintings are also costly ; but, fortunately, chromos, which reproduce them so faithfully, are within the reach of all. If you are not a judge of pictures, get a friend who has some knowledge in such matters to select your chromos and engravings, and do not fall into the mistake of thinking that one chromo will do as well as another, for some are nothing but daubs. And the same remark may be applied to paintings, and in their case, a high price is not an invariable criterion of merit.

It is not easy to give a scale of prices for pictures of any kind, as these depend upon so many contingencies, but good chromos of fine paintings may be bought in small and medium sizes, framed in gilt, as low as from $6.00 to $12.00. And here it may be said, *en passant*, that home-made frames of leather, pine-cones, etc., though they will do very well for engravings and photographs, when others cannot be obtained, do *not* suit chromos. Persons who know little about art imagine that if the picture be fine the frame is of small importance ; but artists will tell you that the beauty of a picture depends very much upon the frame—not that

it should be magnificent, but suitable. Let your chromo have some warm coloring about it, and, if it is a figure picture, be sure it is one that the eye will not weary of. Some most admirable paintings treat of such unpleasant subjects that they should be placed only in picture galleries. It is well for the mind sometimes to dwell upon the heroism of martyrs, but to have the reminder constantly before our eyes is not agreeable, and far from being improving. The same may be said of death-bed scenes and battle pieces, both of which are favorite subjects, if we may judge by the frequency with which they appear on parlor walls.

Besides the chromo, have one or two fine engravings if possible. You need not get very costly ones, and they can be glazed and framed in pretty rustic frames for a small sum.

Don't put dabs of card photographs about on your walls, or dispose of them in groups, or let them be seen at all, except when the leaves of your album are opened.

There are other things besides pictures for adorning walls and giving beauty to a room. Two or three brackets with a little statuette, or vase of artistic design, or flower vase on them. Perhaps one somewhere from which trails a vine. Brackets may be purchased at almost any price, from seventy-five cents to ten dollars, and more ; and very pretty vases, statuettes, and a variety of fancy things can be got at small expense.

And, while speaking of ornaments, we must not forget those very beautiful and graceful things, hanging baskets. These can often be made of materials at hand, at no expense whatever. And there are also flower-stands, aquariums, Wardian cases, etc., which

can be made by some ingenious member of the family, or by a neighboring cabinetmaker, at a small cost.

The following is the best way to get these little "fancies." If you have a thousand dollars with which to furnish your house, go over the price-list you have made out for the different rooms, and strike out here and there some article that is of small account, and make up your mind that on this or that thing you will expend a little less money, and be satisfied with something less pretentious. You will find that in this way you will get a neat little sum for ornamenting your rooms without sacrificing anything useful.

Before casting our eyes down to the floor, we will furnish the windows. If the house has been built under your own directions, of course these have inside shutters, (or blinds.) But if they have them not, you will, first of all, need shades, even if you have outside shutters. Very many housekeepers use *only* shades; some because they think curtains must necessarily be costly; some because of the trouble of packing away woolen curtains in summer, or "doing up" washable materials; and others because "curtains only gather dust." To the first class we say that they labor under a mistake; to the second, that we cannot have anything that is very desirable unless we are willing to take some trouble; and to the third that careful management will prevent the evil they dread, and, moreover, that to be consistent they should take up all their carpets, for it is impossible to find a more indefatigable dust-gatherer than a carpet. If shades are the only hangings for the windows, they should be the painted shades in solid colors with borders. Those with figures and landscapes on them are in bad taste. The bor-

dered shades sell at from two dollars upward, with patent rollers. Dark blues and stone colors are popular hues in these shades, but they throw, when drawn down, a most dispiriting gloom over the apartment. Light stone-colors, buff, and shades in fancy browns are the most desirable, and, when purchasing, remember the color of carpet and walls, and do not get a violent contrast. If, however, you are going to hang curtains or lambrequins over them, let the shades be of Scotch Holland linen. You can buy these ready-made, or make them yourself. The linen can be purchased, yard wide, for thirty cents a yard. The rollers and slats of wood for the bottom, slides, cord, and tassels will also be needed. These fixtures and trimmings cost from forty to seventy-five cents a window. Be exact in your measurements, and make and hang them carefully. The patent rollers are much more handy than the cords and slides, and last a long time, whereas the fixtures in common use soon get out of order. The patent rollers cost one dollar apiece. White is the best color for these shades, and the trimmings should be selected in reference to the general coloring of the room. Blue fades sooner than any other color.

And, in this connection, we beg of you not to tie the tassels up in little muslin or knitted bags in order to preserve the color. They will not fade for some time, and faded tassels, which only show that the inmates of the room care more for the blessed sunlight than for their fifty cent tassels, look far better than these vulgar little bags.

In furnishing a room, curtains are of the first importance. Better get a Brussels instead of a velvet carpet, or an Ingrain in place of a Brussels, than to

have your windows bare of curtains. Without them a room filled with furniture looks unfinished, and with them a poorly-finished parlor gains something of grace and style.

Woolen reps are much used for curtains in winter. They are from two to four dollars a yard; and, if put up by an upholsterer, from twenty to forty dollars a window. Their heavy folds are rich and elegant, and they add greatly to the warmth and cosiness of rooms with a cold exposure. But they also help to darken the room, and to make a short winter day seem still shorter. Rooms that are *lived in,* unless quite large, will be more pleasant with window hangings of lighter materials.

Silk curtains are only suitable for very handsomely furnished apartments; should be made and put up by an upholsterer; and will cost sixty dollars and upward for each window.

Lambrequins are now almost universally used, and, when gracefully draped over curtains of the same or corresponding material, increase the beauty of the effect. But the plain, stiffly-scalloped, heavy woolen lambrequins, without a fold or festoon to break their rigid exactness, that so frequently we see hung over shades or lace curtains, are ugly in the extreme, and the two materials put together in that way are as well suited to each other as a merino basque is to a lace over-skirt.

Lace is the most beautiful, graceful, airy, and light of all curtain material, and looks equally well with the matting, and chintz covered furniture of summer, and with the warm colored carpets, and heavy furnishing of winter. Real lace can be bought now of fine quality and handsome styles, from eighteen to twenty-five dollars a yard,

although there are certain styles that sell at "fancy" prices. It is not as much used now as formerly, even among the wealthy, because the Nottingham laces of the present day are so fine, soft, and fleecy that it is difficult to tell them from the real laces, and the designs on them are generally much more elaborate and beautiful. The prices range from one dollar and a half to fifteen dollars a yard. Those at the first named price are very pretty, and not "cheap-looking;" and quite handsome curtains can be bought at from three to five dollars per yard. The difficulty of doing up lace curtains and preserving that soft fleeciness which is their chief beauty, interferes with their popularity. In cities they are usually sent to persons who make it their business, but this is rather expensive, and, in the country, impossible. But you can do them up to look like new ones if you *know how*, and are careful.*

You can have very pretty and graceful parlor curtains (and these are especially suited to country homes) at a very small expense, by buying a sufficient quantity of Swiss muslin, at fifty cents a yard, and a few yards of heavy silk cord. In measuring your windows, remember that the curtains should fall to the floor, and allow a little for looping back. Get a couple of extra yards, or more if necessary, for the lambrequin, and loop it with cords in some graceful fashion. Also loop the curtain back, at about three feet above the floor.

The following design of a Nottingham lace curtain that we lately saw, was artistic and graceful; and elegant without being suggestive of costliness.

Over the lace curtain, hung in the usual fashion, was a lambrequin of the finest kind of chintz, called *satine*,

* Directions for doing up lace curtains will be found on page 147.

with the lace laid plainly over it. This softened the figures and colors of the chintz without making them less distinct. Across the bottom of this was a cotton fringe, two inches deep, corresponding in color with the *satine*. The lambrequin was then drawn up to hang in heavy folds over the curtain. This style, including cornice of nice finish and moderate width, cost eighteen dollars a window.

If you live in an old-fashioned house, where there is a wide space between the top of the window and the ceiling, you will find lambrequins very useful to hang *above* the windows, in which case, of course, the material must be heavy enough to conceal the wall. The cornice can then be placed high, and the curtains made as long as for larger windows.

Cornices are of gilt, or walnut and gilt. Both styles sell at the same prices, from three and a half to seven dollars apiece, ordinarily ; although they run up as high as twenty-five dollars.

The patent extension cornices are of two kinds : the Adjustable, which may be made to fit any window by a little unscrewing and altering ; and the Telescope, which can be fitted to a window by drawing it in or out like a telescope. These are from five and a half to fifteen dollars apiece.

Carpets, being the most expensive articles in house-furnishing, should be selected with great carefulness as to quality, that they may last long ; and as to pattern, that it be not such as will soon become wearisome to the eyes.

Medallion carpets, large figures, bouquets of flowers, geometrical designs, baskets of roses, stripes, are all undesirable. Any "set" figure becomes tiresome. The

light carpets, of pearl and stone colors, with gay borders, that are now so fashionable, admit of any style or coloring of furniture, and harmonize with all the desirable hues for walls and windows, while the figures of the same shade woven into them are scarcely noticeable. But it is of doubtful expediency to buy a carpet of so very decided a style, as it will look *bizarre* as soon as the fashion passes away. A bordered carpet makes a room look smaller than it is. Scrolls, small interlaced figures, a tracery of vines, or an arabesque pattern (if not large and spreading) are desirable because they do not obtrude themselves upon our notice, and therefore remain in favor for years. The latter, with its graceful lines and figures, without beginning or end, cannot well become tiresome. If a gay floor covering is desired, there is nothing more beautiful than the Persian carpets, where the richest colors run riot in a lovely confusion, without ever becoming glaring or obtrusive.

As you select your window hangings or trimmings with reference to the coloring of your carpet, so your carpet should be chosen to harmonize with your furniture-covering. If you have fixed your fancy upon hair cloth, or very dark colored rep, your carpet should be gay to relieve the sombre effect. If, on the contrary, your furniture-covering is gay, the carpet should be toned down to quite a dark effect. For the medium colors generally used for furnishing, the medium shades are most suitable on the floor, and, in this case, as also in that of the gay furniture, a carpet with one prevailing tint is the prettiest. Browns offer a fine relief to green, blue, or crimson, only, in the case of the latter, they should not be red browns. It is not advisable to have in your carpet a great deal of white for a room

that is much used ; and, on the other hand, a very dark carpet " shows the dirt," as housekeepers say, quite as soon as a light one.

Of carpet material we have a great variety, both foreign and of home manufacture. We make carpets here in nearly all the grades that are imported, and those of standard manufacture are very good indeed, and are durable, although not quite equal to the foreign, on account of the inferiority of our dyes. Any one outside of the trade would find it difficult to decide between an American Ingrain of the best quality and an English. Whatever material you decide upon, let it be good of its kind, for cheap carpets are poor economy. Tapestry, backed with hemp, will soon wear threadbare, and Ingrain which you can almost see daylight through when you hold it up, or which is woven with cotton chain, will not wear long enough to pay for the trouble of making and putting it down. A carpet should be thick, closely woven, soft and pliable. Wilton and English Brussels are considered the most durable of all carpet materials, but they are too costly for common use, and a good Three-ply or Ingrain will last a very long time with moderate care.

The following is a list of the grades of carpeting usually called for, with the ordinary prices per yard :

English Brussels	$2.50
Wilton, (which is cut Brussels)	4.00
English Tapestry	1.35 to 1.50
Velvet, (which is cut Tapestry)	3.00
Three-ply	1.95
English Ingrain	1.75
American Ingrain	1.25 to 1.50
French Axminster	3.00 to 6.00

English Axminster	4.00 to 6.00
American Axminster	3.00 to 5.00

For the room we are considering, either English Brussels, Three-ply, or English Ingrain is suitable; Tapestry is not serviceable enough. In the city it will be best, perhaps, to have Brussels, but it is not a necessity even there. Ingrain, with pretty window hangings, pictures, and ornaments, will make the room look more attractive than Brussels with accompanying destitution; and your friends, in their admiration of the general tasteful arrangement, will overlook the enormity of an Ingrain carpet.

In a country parlor, Three-ply and Ingrain are the rule instead of the exceptions, and therefore you will excite no surprise by laying one of these on your floor. Do not be too ambitious, then, to have Brussels, if you value your peace of mind, for mud and dust are sometimes inevitable, and you will frequently groan in spirit over your expensive carpet. The Ingrain is easily swept, can be taken up and shaken without very great trouble, and can be "turned" when the right side begins to look the worse for wear, whereas a Brussels carpet loses its beauty as soon as the surface is worn.

Carpet lining should be placed under your carpet, as it will last much longer if put down in this way. This is made of fine wool, laid between layers of paper, stretched or quilted. It is moth proof. It is fifteen cents a yard, and is yard wide.

One or two gay rugs, if the carpet be sober-colored, or sober ones if gay-colored, give artistic points of color and effect to the room.

In the spring, carpets should be taken up, well shaken

and beaten, (but not *banged*,) the dust should be beaten out of the linings, the latter rolled around the carpets, and the whole sewed up in coarse linen, and put away in a dry place until the autumn.

It is not desirable to have carpets on the floor in summer. They get filled with dust, they add much to the warmth of a room, and if there is any taint in the air, the woolen carpet is apt to seize upon and hold it. Some writers on health contend that they should *never* be used, for sanitary reasons. But in our country, and certainly in those States where we have such bitter cold weather, carpets, or something similar, will probably be used for all time in the winter season, not only for the warmth they actually impart, but for the feeling of cosy comfort that their very appearance suggests. But in summer we need something cooler, and that is not so retentive of dust and floating exhalations.

Matting is the most popular floor covering for summer. Serviceable Canton matting, of coarse texture, can be bought as low as thirty-five cents a yard, and a very good quality for fifty-five. These are a yard wide. Other widths are a yard and a quarter, and a yard and a half, with prices in proportion. Narrow matting, less than a yard, being scarce, is higher priced.

The custom, that many persons follow, of tacking the breadths of matting to the floor, spoils the floor and is destructive to the matting. Every tack driven in and pulled out breaks at least one straw. These Canton mattings are made on boats, and they are woven together in pieces two yards long. These short pieces are joined together on the shore into lengths of forty yards. Now, where these two-yard pieces are joined they should be sewed across and across, to keep the

joints from opening. Then sew the breadths together, and tack it to the floor in the same way that you treat a carpet. Mattings made in this way will last fully twice as long as where they are tacked in every breadth A good matting should last six or seven years.

Although matting is so popular, some families do not like it at all. Within the last few years a disposition to return to the bare floors of our ancestors—at least for the summer—has manifested itself, and many new houses are laid with handsome floorings to prevent the necessity of covering them with matting. This has given rise to the invention of Wood Carpeting for the benefit of those whose houses are already built with floors that are scarcely presentable. This is made of well-seasoned and kiln-dried hard woods, cut into strips one and an eighth to one and three eighths inches wide, and a quarter of an inch thick, and glued on to heavy cotton drill. The wood is then planed and oiled. It rolls up like an oil-cloth ; can be sent anywhere, and can be laid by any good carpenter. It is nailed down with one and a quarter finishing nails. It can be put down to look like ordinary flooring of one kind of fine wood, or laid with fancy designs, centre-pieces, etc., patterns for which will be furnished, if desired.

It is claimed for this carpeting that it is insect proof; that it is so tight the dust cannot penetrate it, and that it is so thin it does not interfere with door sills, hearth, register, etc., and also that it will last a very long time. But as it has been used only some three or four years, this last point cannot have been satisfactorily tested.

The standard goods in wood carpeting are plain

straight strips of one wood alone, such as Ash, Oak, or Walnut, or alternate strips of different woods. These (yard wide) sell at two dollars a yard. The fancy styles sell by the square foot, from fifty cents to one dollar and a quarter.

Handsome borders in various widths and styles, such as Gothic, Grecian, Rope, Chain, etc., are also manufactured. The usual widths are from five to ten inches, and sell from twenty to sixty cents a foot.

Having fastened down our floor-covering, we will move in the furniture. A parlor suit, as sold at the furniture warerooms, consists of a sofa, one large easy-chair, and one smaller, and four ordinary chairs. Such a suit of solid walnut, plainly finished, covered with good all-wool rep, with upholstered seats and backs for the easy-chairs, and upholstered seats for the other chairs, can be bought as low as eighty-five dollars. One with a little finer finish, and more ornamentation, for one hundred dollars. A hundred and fifty dollars will buy quite a handsome suit, inlaid with French walnut and with ebony mouldings. The lowest price for silk rep covering about three hundred dollars a suit.

These suits will be varied at the option of the purchaser, and it will be well to decline the four chairs, which are never pretty and generally uncomfortable, and substitute two light reception-chairs, a sewing-chair, and one other of fancy straw, or any kind you like. A room furnished with only the regulation suit looks stiff, and unhomelike. Beside these there is a great variety of easy-chairs, rocking-chairs, (both American and Russian,) window chairs, tête-à-têtes, lounge chairs, etc., etc., from which to make a further selection, if your plan allow. A sewing-chair is included in

the above list because our room is both parlor and sitting-room. Where the room is used only for company it will, of course, be omitted.

Furniture upholstered with hair cloth comes at the same prices as the rep. But this sombre, shining, slippery stuff, is, happily, nearly out of fashion. Woolen reps are most used for chair and sofa coverings, and the different qualities range from about two to four dollars a yard ; and the silk reps from six to eight dollars. For costly coverings there are brocatelle, satin and velvet. In a state apartment chintzes are inadmissible, except for summer use, but in this home room the beautiful chintzes now manufactured will be very desirable, and are peculiarly appropriate in the country. They are from thirty-five cents to a dollar and a quarter a yard, and are seen in every possible design, from the most delicate flowers, and gracefully swinging vines, to the shepherd, dog, and crook under the spreading trees, and his sheep sleeping on the hill-side ; enormous bunches of flowers, gorgeous birds, and the fattest Cupids in impossible attitudes. These pictures and huge flowers are revivals of the styles in which our grandmothers delighted, and which have come down to us in bed-quilts and stray scraps. The higher priced of these goods, called *cretonnes* and *satines*, are finely finished ; the latter have a gloss like satin.

In woolen reps green and crimson are the best colors for wear ; and there are beautiful shades in brown that wear very well. Blue fades very soon. The striped reps make handsome coverings for a single chair, but not for a whole suit. It is not necessary to cover all the articles of furniture with the same color ; a little variety gives a more pleasing effect ; only be careful

that you select colors that look well together. If the carpet be very gay, however, it is better taste not to vary much the coloring of the furniture.

A centre-table adds to the home-look of a room, and is, indeed, a necessity where the family gatherings are held. Walnut tables with marble tops range from sixteen to thirty-five dollars, according to size of table and kind of marble. But a much cheaper table of painted wood will look quite as attractive with a pretty cover on it, and a lamp, with its softly-shaded evening light, inviting readers and workers.

A lounge is a very comfortable thing to have in your sitting-room, only don't have it too handsome to be lounged on.

A corner Etagère, or What Not, will cost from five to eight dollars ; a side Etagere from twelve to sixteen. These are sometimes used as book-shelves, instead of receptacles for knick-knacks, where a book-case is unattainable.

The latter, or some substitute, is almost a necessity in our parlors when there is no library. They are expensive articles—a very plain one, indeed, costing twenty dollars, and desirable styles ranging from thirty to sixty-five. A handsome style of book-case is a low one, about four and a half feet high, with a flat top, on which is placed a bust or vase. These are about the same prices as the others. If there is a recess in the room, a very passable book-case may be manufactured by employing a cabinet-maker to construct a framework of shelves, of walnut or stained wood, that can be set into the recess without injuring the walls. The doors must be simply frames for the glass, the panes of which should be large ; tack inside, on the framework around

the glass, woolen or silk stuff, laid in plaits, or gathered up in the centre, and finished with a rosette of the same.

Where there are two communicating rooms, it is best to furnish them alike, and use them in the same way. But some prefer to furnish one for a parlor and the other for a sitting-room, throwing open the doors, or closing them at pleasure ; and this is a convenient arrangement often in cities, where calls are more frequently made than visits. When this is done the window hangings should be the same in both rooms, and the furniture so ordered, as to material, coloring, etc., that the two rooms will not put each other out of countenance.

In the summer you will wish to keep the room partially darkened during the glare and heat of the day, and when flies and dust are waiting for admittance. But use discretion, and do not make it so dark that your eyes are injured by straining them over your work, and your visitors announce their entrance by running up against the sofa, or falling over a footstool. In the winter let in the sunlight freely. You will all thrive on it. Of course this will, in time, fade the most durably colored carpet, but seasons will pass before this becomes noticeable, and an old carpet that is faded is not half as suggestive of poverty of purse, and narrowness of living, as an old one that is " as bright as new."

Such a room can easily be kept free from dirt, dust, and cobwebs ; but some disorder, and what housekeepers call " litter," there must necessarily be in one that is so much used. But you need not worry on this account, for a little comfortable disorder is often much more sensible than stiff, unyielding neatness.

This is the room for all your household gods, so you can have in it your little work-table, with your sewing materials, and the fancy work-basket, containing the bright colored wools, or delicate embroidery. Perhaps there is a chess table, a backgammon board, or box of parlor croquet. Your cat curls up on the rug ; your bird sings in its cage by the window ; the gold-fish dart about within their little glass prisons ; there are flowers here and there, if only a rose on the mantel-piece, or a hyacinth opening its perfumed blossoms to the sunlight on the window-sill.

A visitor ushered into such a room, at once feels at home. A cordial welcome greets him in the very air. It is emphatically the "house-place," and the home life is all around, and suggests topics for interesting and friendly talk. It is all so very different from stiffly sitting in a twilight room, where there is a faint glimmer of white and gold, and a delusive sheen of satin and velvet, and where the hostess sits with idle hands, her heart with her family, her thoughts in her work-basket, and her conversation of the weather, and the gossip of society. No wonder that a half hour is considered a monstrous allowance for such visits as these.

And, when money has become plentiful, and you have added to the modest little home a library, picture gallery, music hall, state bedrooms, and magnificent suits of elegantly furnished parlors, don't fail to keep such a "house-place" for your family and old friends, and the new ones who are worthy of such distinction.

THE BEDROOM.

It is unnecessary to repeat here what has been already said, when speaking of the parlors, in regard to the vari-

ous advantages of painted walls, and wood and paper hangings. The same remarks apply equally well to bedrooms, and the reader is referred to the parlor for all general information on such topics ; only it may be well to offer the suggestion that, next to the white-washed wall, (which is entirely out of date,) in sweetness and cleanliness, must be placed the painted wall, and therefore it is peculiarly adapted to a sleeping apartment. But paint is too expensive for a rented house, and even in one's own house is not always easy to obtain.

Beside the wall papers that are sold for all rooms in common, some are designed especially for bedrooms. For those who like a bright, gaily-colored apartment, the cretonne is recommended. Being new in design and fashionable, it is high-priced, being one dollar a piece, and one dollar and a half for the gilded. But those who buy fancy hangings must expect to re-paper often, for a striking design that seems to us beautiful while in fashion, is hideous in our eyes as soon as the fashion passes.

With these gay papers the window-hangings should be of chintz, of coloring and design that blends harmoniously with the wall, but not like it, for we do not wish to see precisely the same things wherever we turn our eyes. White hangings are much used with this paper, but the contrast is too violent to be altogether in good taste, and, if used, they should be of lace. The carpet must be of one color, soft in tone—for instance, mouse color, with a darker border relieved by rich colors in Grecian or Arabesque pattern. White matting might be laid for summer use. The bed-spread may be white or colored, according to fancy. The furniture should be of light-colored wood, finely varnished

—maple is the prettiest—and of a design that is graceful rather than heavy. The easy-chair may be covered with crimson silk. A cool-toned picture, the subject to be suggestive of pleasant thoughts, to be hung on the wall.

Such a room, half bedroom, half boudoir, would, from its brightness and variety, be suitable for a chronic invalid. It could be furnished in cheaper style with light yellow cottage furniture ; chair covered with crimson cotton, and embroidered carpet of mouse color, or soft brown with a tracery of delicate vines.

The more fortunate beings who are not compelled to stay so much in their bedrooms generally prefer a less brilliant arrangement. Some go so far into the other extreme that their rooms are staring and glaring with lightness and whiteness. Because a bedroom should be light rather than dark, it does not follow that carpet, curtains, walls and bed should be as white as possible. We need some variety of coloring in a bedroom as well as elsewhere, and, while it is desirable that it should look " cool " half the year, it is quite as desirable that it should not look chilly the other half.

For the walls, the plain-tint paper is the prettiest. Figured papers in various styles, widths, and quality, are from twelve cents to three dollars a roll, and bordering from three to twenty cents a yard. Where there is such infinite variety it is sometimes harder to select than when we are limited to very few. For very decided coloring, the lighter yellows—buff, maize, amber, and corn-color—or violet, are the least intrusive, and next the blues, and pinks. But a delicate tint is to be preferred for the ground-work of the paper, and in this case pink is the most desirable, as it diffuses a

glow over the white hangings, and white bed-covering; next cream-color, and then a delicate lilac. The light stone-colors are pretty in themselves, but too negative for a room with white furnishings. White is undesirable, and a decided green is inadmissible. Some of the very light, undecided tints in green are lovely; but it is a color that it is not safe to recommend on account of the poisonous dyes that are sometimes (but not always) used in its manufacture.

A chair-rail of oak or maple, Georgia pine, or even common pine, oiled and varnished, will be a pretty addition to the walls, with reddish brown paper below and blush-color above, or any other arrangement of colors that the situation of the room and other considerations may suggest.

If the paper is buff, Holland shades of the same color will be prettiest for the windows, otherwise have white. The tassels of these must be chosen with reference to the general coloring of the room.

Bedroom curtains may be of Nottingham lace, Swiss muslin, chintz, or dimity. The latter is now rarely used. We have seen in country places quite pretty bedroom curtains made of Wamsutta muslin, bordered with chintz, or bright striped calico, or trimmed with white cotton fringe, which were certainly better than having no curtains at all. But chintz hangings at thirty-five cents a yard, are almost as cheap as these; and lovely chintzes can be bought at from fifty to seventy-five cents. Extremely bright-colored ones are not tasteful, unless with an exceptional style of furnishing like that previously mentioned, but neither should the colors be pale.

Chintz curtains can be made with or without lambre-

quins. These should be of the same material, and trimmed, if at all, with ruffles, or with cotton fringe ; as this is of suitable texture, and will wash. For looping these curtains back, make a broad band of the chintz, interline with wigan, or something stiff, and trim each edge with a narrow plaited or gathered ruffle ; or with fringe, if the lambrequin is trimmed with it.

The white curtains should be looped with silk or woolen cords, and tassels are a pretty addition.

Woolen hangings should never be used in bedrooms, or woolen upholstery of any kind.

Either walnut or gilt cornices are suitable for any of these curtains. Very good ones can be bought for three dollars. Imitations of gilt cornices are very poor affairs, but the walnut can be imitated quite successfully by procuring from a neighboring carpenter a suitable pine moulding, tacking end pieces to it, and staining with black walnut stain. Sometimes these mouldings are covered with gaily-figured, or plain, dark paper, and look very well in a bedroom with chintz curtains, though not as well as the stained wood.

Light colors and small figures make the prettiest bedroom carpets. Here a good deal of white is allowable. English or American Ingrains are the most serviceable. For summer matting you can have white or green and white, or red and white. Wood carpeting is especially to be commended for sleeping-rooms on account of its freedom from dust, and should be of light woods. In whatever rooms wood carpeting is used, rugs should be laid about freely. With a carpet lay a rug in front of the bureau, and an oil-cloth in front of the wash-stand.

A full suit of bedroom furniture consists of ten pieces,

bedstead, bureau, wash-stand, towel-rack, small table, five chairs, and rocking-chair. These are the low and medium priced suits. The more costly ones vary somewhat in number and kind. Wardrobes are made to order, and not included in the regular suits ; but in a large furnishing establishment it is easy to find a wardrobe to match any ordinary style.

You can buy a suit of solid walnut, without towel-rack, plainly finished in a neat style, as low as sixty-five dollars, or one in the same style, but with marble tops on bureau and washstand, for seventy-five. Another style of ten pieces includes a small table with a marble top, also washstand and bureau with marble, and sells for ninety-five dollars ; a handsomer suit, but without table, one hundred dollars ; and a suit of finer finish, and with French walnut panels, one hundred and twenty-five ; and so on up to almost any price.

Oak furniture ranges at about the same prices as the walnut. Chestnut, with walnut finishings, can be got in very pretty styles, from fifty-five to seventy-five dollars. The maple woods are generally very finely finished, and are more costly in the same styles.

In the higher priced suits, a new style of dressing-case is sometimes substituted for the bureau. In these the looking-glass extends to the floor, with ornamental wood-work on each side of the recess thus formed. Sometimes this is in fancy designs—Egyptian obelisks, etc.—but more frequently is fitted with small drawers for the reception of toilet articles. This style will be preferred by those who are furnishing with regard to beauty and fine effect, and who can dispense with the bureau drawers. These suits sell at two hundred and fifty dollars and upward.

The oiled furniture does not compare in beauty with the finely-polished woods, but these are costly, and the low-priced varnished furniture is undesirable in every way. The oiled walnut deserves the high degree of favor it enjoys. It is pretty; can be easily kept clean; does not show scratches readily; and, when it begins to look dim, its beauty can be renewed without expense.*

The style of furniture known as "cottage" is thought by many to be in bad taste; and there was very good ground for this opinion in its early days, when it first became fashionable, for it was too often poorly finished, rough in design, and tawdry in coloring. But now it is well made, and more artistically painted. It is prettier and more desirable than the pine furniture, stained in imitation of the costly woods. It can be bought, or ordered, in any color that you fancy; but French grey, the light stone colors, and soft browns will furnish a room in better taste than the blues, greens, and yellows that have been the rule until recently. The prices range from thirty-five dollars a suit to one hundred. Ten dollars additional will furnish the first named with ordinary white marble tops for the bureau and washstand, which are desirable, not only for the increased beauty, but for durability, as the wooden tops soon become scratched and stained.

The little cane rocking-chair that accompanies bedroom suits is very well; but its five stiff companion chairs can be dispensed with to advantage. You had better get a comfortably stuffed easy-chair, in which you can lounge. Let it be covered with something—not woolen

* Directions on page 149.

—that will correspond with your carpet and hangings. Or you can buy an uncovered one, and cover it yourself with chintz like the curtains. Or your country cabinet-maker will manufacture one that will not cost much; will, doubtless, be rather clumsy, but will be easy, and can be made to look very well. These two chairs, with a couple of ottomans, will probably be all the seats you will desire, as we do not usually entertain visitors in our bedrooms.

The toilet-table, that was once considered a necessary addition to every bedroom, has vanished into remote country places. And yet it is a beautiful and graceful piece of furniture, and redeems a modern bedroom from that stiffness that is too apt to be its characteristic. Those made to set into corners are not recommended. They entirely lack the artistic effect of the larger table with straight back, and semicircular front, that should be placed in a prominent position. These can be clad in the simple drapery of white Swiss muslin and glazed cambric; or in the costly attire of satins and laces.

Have a light table, made of ordinary pine wood, the top semicircular in front, and straight at the back. It must be made so as to stand firmly, but must also be easy to lift; for one advantage of these tables is that they can be carried about the room and placed wherever the light is best. It should be about three feet high, and thirty inches across the straight part.

Tack around this blue, rose-colored, or amber cambric, or any hue that matches or harmonizes with the prevailing tone of the room. Make it a little full at the corners. Get sheer white muslin, Swiss or French; allow fullness enough for it to fall in soft and graceful

folds, without there being enough of it to "stand out" around the bottom, or look "bunchy" at the top ; hem the top and bottom ; and gather it below the upper hem. With the sewing-machine stitch these gathers firmly to linen tape, laid under them.

Around the edge of the table tack thick cotton tape, or a strip of cotton cloth on which you have previously sewed dress hooks at convenient distances apart, with the hooks upward. On the tape of the valance sew little loops corresponding with these hooks. The valance can then be easily removed for washing, and put on again when clean.

For the top make a cushion half an inch or less in thickness by quilting together pieces of old calico. Over this spread your cambric, and over this again your muslin, turning the edges under the calico cushion, and, in the case of the muslin, tack it so lightly with needle and thread that it can be readily taken off for washing. Lay this on the table, and tack in three or four places with tin tacks to keep it from slipping. These will be concealed by the standing ruffle of the valance. Or a silk cord of the color of the cambric could be run around the edge of the table under the valance ruffle. Or the valance could be made without the little ruffle on the top, and a wide muslin ruffle sewed on the cushion so as to fall over the edge of the table. This is the prettier style, but more trouble.

A pin-cushion should be made of the same material.

A small mirror, with a small-hinged prop at the back, will complete the furnishing. Or you can have a prop fastened on the back of a common looking-glass. The frame can be entirely concealed by drapery of muslin caught back with cords, or tied with ribbon.

A toilet set of plain white china of thirteen pieces will cost seven dollars and a half, and a set of stone china about five dollars. The former is the most desirable, as it looks well as long as it lasts, while the glazing wears off the latter after a time. A Japanese toilet set, including water-carrier, foot-tub and slop-jar, will cost four dollars.

One or two attractive pictures are particularly desirable for a bedroom, as there growing plants are entirely out of the question, and even cut flowers are unwelcome unless inodorous. The only desirable fragrance in a bedroom is that imparted by perfect cleanliness, and by pure, sweet air; with, perhaps, a faint breath of lavender in the sheets.

We have arrived at the bedding last, and yet it is first in importance, surely, in a room which is set apart for sleeping. To begin at the foundation—various kinds of springs, noiseless, elastic and durable, can be bought for from five to eight dollars. It is not easy to tell which of these various patents is the best. One is desirable for one thing, and one for another. But two things may be definitely said: first, that good springs are better than any kind of sacking, slats, or under bed; and, secondly, when buying springs you should examine them to see if you can easily get at every part to clean them, otherwise they will only prove harbors for vermin. Spring mattresses should never be used.

The most comfortable bed is one good thick hair mattress laid on elastic springs. If two mattresses are used the under one should also be of hair, as straw and husks nearly neutralize the elasticity of the springs. The retail price of hard hair is seventy cents a pound, and the mattresses sell at the same rates. Forty pounds

is the weight of a mattress for ordinary double bedsteads, and it will consequently cost twenty-eight dollars. Soft hair sells at sixty cents a pound, and a bed made of it at twenty-four dollars. A straw underbed will cost three dollars, and a husk one five and a half. Where a feather bed is used a mattress must, of course, come between it and the springs; and here, as the feathers are so elastic, a husk mattress will do, but hair is far preferable. Geese feathers sell at a dollar a pound, and a feather bed consequently will cost forty dollars. A very costly article, and except in some few cases, an undesirable one.

Ordinary pillows weigh from three and a half to four pounds; five pounds will make quite a large one; although some like monsters of eight and ten pounds.

A bolster weighs about six pounds.

Cotton ticking for feather beds comes at thirty-two cents a yard; for hair at twenty-five; and for straw and husks at eighteen. The imported linen ticking is sixty cents for the seven-eighth width, and eighty cents for yard and a quarter wide.

Thick, soft, fleecy blankets of fair quality can be bought from ten to fifteen dollars a pair, and the finer grades from fifteen to twenty-five dollars.

Very pretty Marseilles bed-spreads are from four to six dollars apiece; and some neat styles, but of rather coarse quality, as low as two and a half.

Sheetings, both in linen and cotton, are from two and a quarter to two and a half yards wide. The first is wide enough for ordinary bedsteads. The sheets should be two and a half yards long; and made with one hem wider than the other, so that the top can always be distinguished from the bottom. You can get cotton sheet-

ing heavy and good, and of medium fineness, for fifty cents a yard; and the linen is from one dollar and twelve cents to two dollars. Pillow-case cottons and linens are five and six quarters wide. The cotton is from twenty-five to thirty-six cents a yard, and the linen from seventy cents to a dollar. Three pairs each of sheets and pillow-cases should be allowed to a bed, but, if several bedrooms are furnished, this proportion will be found greater than is necessary.

Pillow-case covers made of linen, and prettily trimmed and ornamented are now much used to lay over the pillows during the day. They make the bed look prettier, and conceal the tumbled appearance that pillow-cases that are slept on must necessarily have, and they keep clean a long time.

In Europe linen sheets are universally used by the better class, but they are not as common in this country as very many persons have a prejudice against them, considering them unsuited to our climate, and unhealthful. There can be no such objection to linen pillow-cases, however, and it is not at all out of place to use them with cotton sheets, although linen sheets and cotton pillow-cases would look strangely enough.

Bed hangings, those ancient health-destroyers, being entirely unsuited to the modern bedstead, are, fortunately, obsolete. But some persons who still have the old-fashioned "four-posters" imagine that they give beauty to what has it not by hanging a strip of wavy lines, or festoons of cotton, silk, or woolen around the top. Thus treated, they remind one more of a tall girl who has outgrown her clothes than of anything else.

But, whatever you do with your "four-poster," don't have it cut down under the impression that you thereby

make it resemble the modern styles. Usually the only virtue ancient furniture possesses is that it looks ancient—that is its one redeeming quality. To our modern eyes the four-post bedstead is an ugly and clumsy invention, but the queerly-turned, or elaborately-carved posts have a quaintness that pleases the fancy, and an attractiveness apart from beauty. We associate them with the dames of olden times arrayed in their wonderful farthingales, gay bodices, towering head-dresses, and trains of shining satin ; and with the stately cavaliers in velvet coats, lace ruffles, silk breeches, diamond buckles and flowing wigs. We can imagine them all bedecked for the ball, practising the steps of the minuet that had to be so perfectly executed, or studying the best way of making their elaborate bows and curtsies under the shadow of this very "four-poster." We may reasonably suppose that you keep it where it is, because it is an heir-loom, an old family piece, around which cluster tender memories. But, cut it down, and not even illusion remains to invest its clumsiness with the grace of poetry. It becomes at once a hybrid monster, like nothing else that was or is under the sun; and we find out then that instead of being a dear old friend that you cherish, it is only a poor relation of whom you are ashamed, and would gladly be rid.

We are apt to forget of how much importance is a good bed, and a pleasant and healthful room to put it in, until we reflect that our Creator has so constituted us that one third of our whole existence is passed in sleep. This is Nature's great restorer, and we must help her in her kindly office by doing our part to make all the conditions favorable to the development of the highest degree of health.

A bedroom should be light, airy, and cheerful, and, above everything else, well ventilated. "To sleep in a room without a fire," is often cited as a highly proper and healthful thing to do. And it may be to sleep in a room where the fire is not kept up at night, but to sleep where there has been no fire during the cold season is quite the contrary of a healthful practice. In our climate, in both the Northern and Southern States, every bedroom that is occupied should have a fire lighted in it during the winter, at least for a short time *every day.* If you are obliged to keep up a fire at night, lower the windows at the top. A fire is oftentimes a great purifier. Not that we advise a hot bedroom, or indeed any *hot* room, but it must be borne in mind that the important thing is, not to keep the room cold, but to take such precautions that a sufficient quantity of fresh outside air shall be regularly supplied. Furnace heat, although objectionable in some respects, is certainly desirable for bedrooms, for the one reason that it can be let in or shut out at pleasure.

THE DINING-ROOM.

If, on visiting a house the first time, we are ushered into the parlor, and find it elegantly appointed, we have no reason to suppose that the other rooms at all correspond with it. The bedrooms may be bare and uncomfortable ; the dining-room dark, half-furnished, etc. If we are received in a bedroom, and find it all right, we may be almost certain that the parlor is, at least, equally well furnished, but we have no guarantee for the dining-room and kitchen. But if, by any chance, we happen to see the dining-room first, and find it an

attractive room, completely furnished, and in good taste, we may regard it as positive proof that the whole house is ordered in the same complete and attractive manner. For, although a dining-room may be one of the first rooms in the house sufficiently furnished to be used, it is generally the last to receive the finishing touches of grace and beauty.

It is well, even when furnishing with slender means, to distribute the pretty things throughout the house with tolerable equality, so that the dining-room shall receive its share. For it is not (or, at least, should not be) merely an apartment to hold a table and a sufficient number of chairs to place around it, where we may eat three times a day, getting through the meals as speedily as possible ; the only pleasure anticipated or desired being the tickling of our palates by delicate flavors. Our meals should be social gatherings, to which we look forward with pleasure from other motives than those of gormandizing, or even a necessary satisfying of our hunger. A hearty liking for the good things of the table is natural and healthful, and should be encouraged by abundant food appetizingly prepared, and not repressed by meagre fare and badly cooked dishes. But the family meeting, the pleasant talk, the joking and laughter, (and plenty of it,) should be, certainly, quite as eagerly desired. And such meetings might be extended to a much greater length than is the usual custom, with advantage to the family enjoyment and the family health. To accomplish all this effectually the surroundings should be complete and comfortable, and suggestive of pleasant thoughts.

Dark walls do not suit a dining-room any better than a parlor or bedroom, and, in fact, precisely the same

rules hold good here as have been already laid down for the furnishing of parlor and bedroom walls as to coloring, and the various advantages of painted walls, wood hangings, and different styles of paper. Of the latter, however, one style may be mentioned that is not admissible for either of those rooms, except for wainscotings, but very suitable for a dining-room wall—the oak paper, which is an excellent imitation of wood, and sells for thirty-five cents a piece. It is very pretty, though not as handsome as the higher priced and more delicately colored papers, but has its advantages. It is perhaps a questionable recommendation to anything in a dining-room, to say that "it does not show dirt." And yet, as flies will invade a dining-room to some extent, do what you may to prevent it, and as it is expensive and troublesome to re-paper frequently, some consideration must be given to the fact that the medium color of the oak paper does not show fly specks like the more delicate tints on the one hand, and does not "show dirt" as soon as the dark paper on the other.

An oak chair-rail can be run around the room, breaking up the uniformity of this paper, while adding to its general wood-like appearance. Or the oak paper can be used for wainscoting, and above a pale brown, with a little dash of color, finished with a black and gold border.

In describing parlor and bedroom nothing was said about the wood-work, because where this is of fine woods it will, of course, be simply oiled or varnished to bring out the graining, and where of common wood white paint is so universally preferred that it seemed useless either to praise or depreciate it. On the whole it is, perhaps, the most suitable for a parlor, and desir-

able for a bedroom where paint is used at all. But there are several light colors, very pretty for the latter room if used in harmony with the wall colors—a very beautiful light green tint, for instance.

In case your dining-room or bedroom has never been painted, if you oil the wood with raw linseed oil, giving it three coats, and varnish it with white varnish, it will probably please you better than paint, even if the wood-work is nothing but pine, and the more knotty it is the prettier the grain ; and you will find that the color will deepen with age.

Parlors and bedrooms may be grained in imitation of the handsome woods, but it is not altogether desirable, except sometimes for the doors. But for dining-rooms it is the next best thing to having the fine wood itself. Oak, maple, or chestnut are desirable (walnut is too dark) and all woods can be successfully imitated ; but *be sure that the grainer is an artist in his business.* This is absolutely essential, for badly grained wood is obtrusively and staringly ugly. If you have the room painted, it should be in a medium and neutral tint that is in harmony with the walls. A violet grey will harmonize with the oak and brown mentioned above.

Hang white or buff shades at the windows. If the walls are oak, the shades should be white, and the curtains should also be white, or of very light, or bright-colored chintz. The lighter or medium shades of green or crimson are the most desirable for solid-colored woolen reps. If the walls are quite light the window hangings may be of more sober tints, if desired. Reps with a grey flowered stripe down each width are very handsome. The orthodox style for dining-room curtains, according to the laws of upholsterers, is rep in

winter, and lace in summer. Fall curtains of woolen rep help very much in giving the dining-room the appearance of being fully and elegantly furnished when there is really not very much in it, and they impart to the room a cosiness and warmth, and richness of coloring; and here are not open to the same objection that was made to them for the parlor. They are desirable, but by no means necessary. The lowest priced, made of good material, would probably cost about sixteen dollars a window, not including the cornice, and they could only be used in winter. Lace looks well during the whole year. But this, perhaps, is rather more costly for a dining-room than you would desire, as the cheapest could not be put up under twelve dollars a window.

White Swiss muslin makes a simple and pretty drapery, but for a dining-room the heavy chintzes would be more *en règle*. The satines come in a variety of beautiful designs, and are heavy and glossy. They are from one dollar to one and a quarter per yard, and require no extra trimmings. The cheaper chintzes will also make quite pretty hangings.

For this room an oiled or stained floor, or wood carpeting, possesses the most advantages. They are handsome, too, and should have a bright drugget laid under the table, and a richly-colored rug in front of sideboard and hearth. But, if you prefer a carpet, get a Three-ply or Ingrain with small figures, or mixed grounds, and in medium colors. Brussels is not at all out of place, if you wish a carpet of a costlier kind, but you must remember that careless servants are necessarily much in this room, and that many feet will tread over its floor, and that when the surface wears from a Brussels its day is done. Do not have such a very

nice carpet that you feel you must cover it up with a drugget, except a narrow strip around the edge, left to show that you have a carpet. There is not much enjoyment to be got out of one's possessions if they are put out of sight. And, besides, it is of doubtful economy. An experienced housekeeper would tell you that the colors are very apt to fade under the drugget, and that the dust that will inevitably sift through it on to your carpet will not add to its beauty.

But a crumb-cloth of linen or woolen drugget may be laid under the table to prevent the carpet from being greased, or otherwise soiled. Linen drugget sells at about one dollar a square yard, and woolen at one dollar and a quarter. The above objections do not apply to crumb-cloths, as they are so frequently taken up.

Anything is better on a dining-room floor than oil-cloth. It is bare, cheerless, and inelegant, and gives to servants much unnecessary cleaning.

Matting can be laid down for summer.

Extension tables are now almost universally used as dining tables. A plain substantial one of walnut, that will seat twelve persons, can be bought as low as fourteen dollars, and quite a handsome one for twenty ; and so they grow in price as they grow larger, heavier, and more ornate. Other American woods sell at about the same rates.

Dining-room chairs of walnut, oak or maple, with cane seats, well made, (and not with the different parts merely glued together,) are thirty-six dollars a dozen. Made of cheaper woods they are twenty-four dollars a dozen.

It is by no means uncommon to see very prettily furnished dining-rooms without a sideboard, as they are costly and not essential, particularly where there is a

china closet convenient. But get one, if you can afford it, for they are very useful, and are now made in such beautiful styles that they are very ornamental pieces of furniture. Handsome ones in walnut, oak, and maple can be bought for forty dollars.

If you have no sideboard, a table should be placed at the side of the room for the reception of the extra dishes, plates, glasses, etc., which will be needed during the meal. During the summer there should also be a small table with a marble top, on which the water-cooler should be placed. If an ice pitcher is used instead, it can be set on the sideboard, or side table. If the water-cooler is kept on the sideboard it should stand in a deep waiter that the marble may not be injured by the drippings from it through careless handling.

As regards ornaments for this room, let me entreat that you will not keep there on exhibition a wax dessert. Ice cream jellies and cakes are not precisely objects of art, and though they look attractive and pretty to us in connection with the suggestion of delicious flavor, when placed before our eyes in wax, hint possibilities that perhaps your table does not realize.

Statues, busts, and statuettes, though they adorn banqueting halls, are entirely out of place in ordinary dining-rooms, and vases also, unless they have something in them—grasses, plants, or flowers. A clock is allowable, but it is often an ungracious reminder that the dinner is late, or that the pleasant party has been a long time at the table. In fact, small ornaments are here in questionable taste, except the candelabras and ornaments of quaint, rich, and heavy designs that are manufactured expressly for dining-room mantels. Failing these, supply their places with grasses and flowers.

There is no room in which flowers and plants are as welcome. You cannot have too many of them. Put cut flowers on mantel, table, and sideboard, and have plants growing in the windows or on flower-stands in front of them.

Pictures are in good taste, and highly desirable, but not of fruits or desserts. These, unlike the wax abominations mentioned previously, may be very beautiful or ingenious in themselves, but when we have the real thing before our eyes we care little for the representation, and if we have it not, do not care at that precise time to be reminded of it. And pictures of dead game are not altogether pleasant and appetizing for dining-room walls. If you have fine paintings or chromos of "still life" you had better hang them in any other room than this, if you wish them to be fully appreciated.

THE KITCHEN.

A white-washed wall is best for the kitchen, as it is pure and sweet, and can so easily be freshly white-washed whenever it is soiled. The whitewash can be colored if a tint is desired. This makes a prettier wall, but has the disadvantage that, whenever any place becomes soiled, (and accidents are not uncommon in kitchens,) a white-washer must be called in to repair the mischief, whereas the ordinary whitewash can be put on by anybody sufficiently well for this purpose ; and thus no greasy and unsightly spots need ever be seen on the kitchen wall. The ceiling and walls should be whitewashed at least twice a year.

Painted wood-work is not desirable ; it soon looks dirty, unless washed very frequently with soap, which

process soon wears off the paint in spots. The wood, left in its native state, requires a great deal of hard scrubbing ; but if oiled and varnished, or simply oiled, will keep clean a long time, and can be easily and quickly wiped off with a little water.

In many kitchens, especially in the city, window shades are a superfluity, for the rooms are quite dark enough without their aid ; but, if your room happens to be so light and sunny as to make shades desirable, Holland linen in grey, light brown, or deep buff, will make very serviceable ones. Or they can be made of solid colored calico, if wide enough, which will not fade in the sun, or by washing. But muslin curtains will generally be preferred to the shades, as they soften the light without shutting it out. Get two and a half, or three yards of wide, white, "cross-barred" muslin, at twenty-five or thirty cents, and make a plain curtain, without fullness, with a string run through the hem at the top, that it may be drawn back and forth ; or, what is better, hang it on a rod, with the old-fashioned curtain rings. If a more artistic arrangement is desired, get two widths, gather, and sew the tops to a tape, and tack to the inside of a lath two or three inches wide. Put on short end-pieces, and stain the little cornice thus made with black walnut stain. These curtains are somewhat troublesome, as they have to be washed frequently, but they are easy to do up. They should not be starched stiffly. Half curtains of muslin are often sufficient for kitchen windows.

If the flooring is smoothly and evenly laid, the cleanest and least troublesome method of treating it is to oil it well two or three times a year. It does not soil easily then, and when soiled can be washed readily, and

without scrubbing. If it is not in proper condition for oiling, stain it with black walnut stain. This will probably have to be renewed every spring and fall, but is not difficult to do, and will cost less than fifty cents for each application. In the winter you will need to lay strips of carpet in front of the tables. It is easy to sweep these uncarpeted floors, and there is no dust rising from them and mingling with the food that is being prepared. But we are far from commending the use of bare floors, that are neither stained nor oiled. These require too much soap and sand scrubbing. They suggest tired backs, and weary arms, and aching knees. Housekeepers should arrange everything as far as possible to avoid scrubbing. It is very hard labor, performed in a painful position, and motives of humanity ought to lead us to lessen it wherever we can. Servants complain bitterly of this work, and in England there is a painful disease known as "Housemaid's Knees," that is produced by this very scrubbing. And then, too, it takes a great deal of the servant's time to very little profit.

Oil-cloth is generally preferred for kitchen floors, but it is costly when good, and no other is worth putting down in a room where it will be so hardly used. The best American oil-cloth is two dollars a square yard, and you can get a fair quality for a dollar and a half, but scarcely for less. And it has the disadvantage of the unstained floor—it has to be washed very often. True, it ought not to be *scrubbed*, and especially with lye soap, but servants will do it unless closely watched. They imagine they clean it sooner this way ; and more oil-cloth has been worn out by servants' scrubbing than any other means—the lye soon eats its way through the

cloth. But, if it should not be scrubbed in this way, it has to be washed very frequently, and is easily soiled, Wood carpeting is not more costly than the best oil-cloth. and is not open to the same objections. Indeed, where the floor is badly laid, it is the best covering for it.

Carpets are not suitable for kitchens, not being cleanly enough, and they are troublesome to manage, as they have to be shaken so often. But, if the room is very cold, a square of carpet may be laid in the middle of the floor, fastened down by rings at the four corners, which rings are slipped over smooth-headed tacks driven into the floor.

If, however, you choose to cover your kitchen floor with a carpet, Rag is the best, because it is thick and heavy. It should not be laid in separate breadths, but regularly made, and tacked down only in front of the doors and places where it is liable to trip any one up, and there as lightly as possible, so that it can be taken up with little trouble. For it should be well shaken twice a week.

A dresser is indispensable in a kitchen, and, if you rent a house without it, insist upon the landlord putting one up. If you have one made under your own directions, let it be large enough for two wide closets below, and three narrower ones above. The upper closet should be far enough above the lower to allow the top of the latter to be used for a shelf, or rather, a sort of table. The lower closets should be at least two feet in depth. In the one nearest the fireplace, keep the cooking utensils ; in the other, the small stores of flour, corn-meal, sugar, coffee, tea, etc.; also the spices, box of stale bread, and whatever is to be used in cooking ; it is the place, also, for the pastry-board, bread-bowl,

and rolling-pin. This latter closet must, of course, be provided with some shelves. It is well to have above these closets a row of drawers, in which to keep the kitchen table-cloths, towels, ironing-blankets, etc. If there are no drawers, a couple of shelves in an upper closet can be appropriated to these things.

The upper closets should be a few inches less in depth than the lower, and two of them filled with shelves. The smaller one of these is intended for a place of temporary deposit for meats, butter, oysters, soup-stock, preserves, fruits, and everything of this kind prepared for cooking, and presently to be used, instead of standing, sometimes for hours, on the tables, catching the dust and attracting the flies. This is the place for the salt-box. And here, too, may be kept the pieces set aside for beggars. In the second closet, also with shelves, the kitchen china is placed. The third should have but one shelf, at the top, on which may be kept the soap, washing soda, starch, and anything that is not used every day. Below this is a clear space, in which the tins are hung. Some persons like to see these disposed around the kitchen walls, and they have a sort of homely beauty, but they necessarily get dusty, and their brightness dims sooner when thus exposed to the moist air, and they will therefore require more frequent cleaning.

If there is no laundry, in which to keep the implements for washing and ironing, try to dispose of them in some other place than the kitchen. The flat-irons can stand on the mantel-piece, and you may, possibly, find room for the wash-boiler in a dresser closet; but the tubs can be put in the cellar, and the clothes-

baskets, skirt-board, etc., in some closet or unoccupied room.

You will need two tables, of unpainted and unvarnished wood, and on these the servant can exercise her gift for scrubbing, and bestow upon them the attention that the oiled floor does not need. The size of the tables depends somewhat upon that of the kitchen—one three and the other five feet long are the usual sizes; and they will cost respectively three and five dollars.

Ordinary painted wooden chairs are about seventy-five cents apiece. You will, probably, require three or four. The best chairs are of oiled ash, or common maple, with broad, low seats, and bent backs, and are a dollar apiece. To make these wooden chairs more comfortable, cushions may be made of ticking, and stuffed with hair, with calico covers that will slip on and off readily, as they will have to be frequently washed.

A very popular article of kitchen furniture is one that can be converted into a table or settee at pleasure.

The kitchen should have a clock, and it must be one that is warranted to keep good time, for on it a great deal of the comfort, and some of the good temper, perhaps, of the family will depend. Three dollars is probably the lowest price for a good common clock, and yet the very cheap ones do sometimes keep in good running order for years. It is a good plan to keep it locked, and wind it yourself, not always for fear that the servants will tamper with it, and change the hands to suit their convenience, but because they are careless and will neglect it, or wind it recklessly, and injure it; and

besides, if you set the time yourself, there can be no disputing about it.

Beside these things you will, of course, have a sink. Painted iron ones are now considered the best. It should not be smaller than two and a half feet long, and a foot and a half broad.

These are all the things necessary for the furnishing of the room ; they are few and inexpensive. The furnishing of the closets will cost very much more, for in them are enclosed the most important articles of kitchen furniture. A list of these is given at the end of this volume. It is very full, and it is not absolutely necessary to get everything mentioned there at once if you do not feel able to do so. Select what you need for immediate use, and add to your store from time to time until you have completed the list. For there is nothing set down there that is not necessary for perfect housekeeping. And, indeed, many things are omitted on the list that are very desirable, but not essential, and which should be bought if there are means for the purpose. Some of these articles are set down under the regular list as "Extras," but others are necessarily excluded. The labor-saving machines, pea-shellers, apple-parers, raisin-seeders, and others, being patent inventions, are rather expensive, but will be found of very great service in all families, and more especially in those where but one servant is kept, often saving the hiring of extra help.

The kitchen is pre-eminently the cooking-room, and, in furnishing, that should be kept in view. But it is also, in most houses, the servant's evening sitting-room, and ought to be made comfortable for her. If the floor is uncarpeted, and the room is cold, let her have a little

square of carpet to lay on the floor in the evening, and if there is no gas, let there be a good hanging lamp that will throw down a bright light, and some hanging shelves with a few books and papers might suggest to her employment for a leisure hour.

HALL AND STAIRWAY.

A hall, properly speaking, is a wide and lofty apartment, from which, generally, not necessarily, rises a spacious, imposing staircase. Such a hall requires several articles of furniture, a sofa, a settee, or something of that kind ; some high-backed, stately chairs, with low, wide seats, leather covered, a table, a large hat-stand, with mirror ; the walls adorned with stag horns, curiosities, and a picture ; perhaps brackets and busts ; large vases are on each side of the doorway, and niches are occupied by statues.

But in America we call our narrow entries halls. In the ordinary city houses one article of furniture—a hat-stand and umbrella-rack combined—makes the hall quite crowded ; and in the country, where they are somewhat wider, the addition of a table and couple of chairs fills them to their utmost capacity.

Such narrow halls should have carpets laid down without borders, as these only make them look narrower than they really are, except in the case of a very short entry, when a border makes it look longer. Ingrain carpeting is not used for halls and stairways, but the heavier Venetian takes its place. This is sold in various widths—the best, if yard wide, is two dollars and a half a yard, and the other widths in proportion. It can be got of fairly good quality at lower prices, but as an entry does not require many yards, and

as it has rather hard usage, you should get the best if possible. English Brussels is the same price, and in texture wears equally well, but in time the colors rub off, and it cannot be turned like the Venetian. Wilton, having a cut pile, wears still longer than the Brussels. So does good Velvet, as that also has a cut pile, but there is no carpet to which dirt so quickly and pertinaciously adheres as to this, and it is very hard to sweep. You can put the same grade of carpeting on your halls and stairway that is in your parlor, or a lower one, but not a better grade. If Ingrain is on your parlor floor, Venetian must clothe the hall, but if you have Brussels in the parlor, you can still have Venetian in the hall, or you can have Brussels, but not Wilton, or Velvet.

The carpet should be alike on entry and stairway, and if you are furnishing two or three flights, it is good economy to furnish them all alike, though this is not necessary. If the carpet does not extend quite to the walls, it is admissible to have a strip of painted floor, but it is not desirable, and does not look as well as to sew a border to the carpet. On the stairs, on the contrary, the carpet should not extend entirely across, but a space should be left on each side which can be painted, stained, or grained.

In measuring for stair carpet you should allow a little piece at top and bottom to run under the hall carpet, and also half a yard extra to allow for moving it up or down whenever it is put down after shaking, as this constant moving prevents it from wearing at the edges of the steps. Stair pads should be laid under the carpet, as it will then last twice as long ; they also make it look richer, and feel softer under the feet. These are

layers of cotton quilted between cotton cloth, and can be bought from two to three dollars a dozen, according to width.

Stair-rods vary so much in width, length and design that it is impossible to say precisely what are best for any particular case. It may be generally stated that the nickel rods are from ten to twenty-five dollars a dozen ; the brass from one dollar and a half to eighteen dollars, and the wooden (of all kinds of wood) from one dollar to twelve.

In wet weather it is well to lay down a strip of linen or woolen drugget on the hall carpet, otherwise snow-slush or mud will be tracked over it, notwithstanding the mat at the door. But it is not well to keep it down when the ground is dry.

A floor laid with fine woods, nicely oiled or varnished, is more beautiful for a hall than any carpet. Next to this the wood carpeting is most desirable. Gay mats should be laid at all the doors opening from the hall.

Oil-cloth is frequently used for halls, but it is not easy to see what advantages it possesses. It is neither floor, nor carpet ; has the unclothed look of the former without any of its richness and beauty ; and the figures and flowers of the latter without any of its warmth of coloring, or its suggestions of comfort and completeness ; and it is more expensive than the former, and quite as costly as the latter. It requires a great deal of scrubbing, and will have to be replaced as soon as it is a little worn, or it will give a poor appearance to the house. For every housekeeper knows that her house is judged by the first impression produced on her visitor's mind by the hall.

If oil-cloth is laid in the hall, you should put paper

under it wherever the sun will be likely to shine much upon it, otherwise it may stick fast to the floor.

Within a few years a new article has been manufactured that bids fair to take the place of oil-cloth. It is called Linoleum, and is made of cork and India-rubber, put upon a canvas back, like the oil-cloth. It is pleasanter under the feet than oil-cloth, is more durable, and is thought by those who have used both, to be superior to it in every respect. It is two dollars a square yard. It is an English manufacture.

The prettiest style for the walls is a wainscoting of walnut, with wood hangings above of solid oak, or the oak might be paneled with some walnut, but not striped. Avoid stripes whether of wood or paper.

If the wall is painted, any of the light tints are suitable ; but if the hall is wide, and very light, a dark shade may be desirable.

Panel paper is appropriate for a hall, even if not spacious, because its narrowness, in connection with its comparatively great length, and the open stairway gives an impression of height, and this is why stripes are objectionable. Grey, or stone color, paneled with dark brown, will probably be most satisfactory.

If figured paper is used, it should not be of vines or flowers, but of mixed, indistinct patterns, and as nearly as possible of one tint, or else delicately shaded. Embossed papers may also be used in halls, if they can be found in the proper colors, but the decided hues, such as crimson and green, are there entirely out of place.

The same paper should be used all the way up as many halls and flights of stairs as the house contains, except in the case of panel paper, when, if preferred, the paneling can cease at the end of the landing of the

first flight, and the plain tint continued the rest of the way. It is not, of course, necessary to continue wood hangings and painted walls beyond the first flight of stairs.

Marbled papers are not pretty, and, as not even the stupidest person actually supposes for a moment that your walls are built of solid marble, there is really no illusion in them.

There is no place where wainscoting shows to the advantage it does in a hall. Walnut or oak may be used with any style of paper. And so can any other wood you may fancy, but these two seem most appropriate for halls.

If you cannot afford a wainscoting, have a chair-rail of oak or walnut, with the same colors above and below in different shades—a dark stone-grey below, and a light stone-color above, is perhaps the prettiest combination for a hall.

A gas-fixture, or lamp of graceful pattern, should be suspended from the ceiling in the middle of the hall, or between the stairway and the front door.

THE SERVANT'S ROOM.

If you have secured a good servant, one of the surest ways of retaining her is to give her a comfortable room; and, if she is not a very good one, perhaps the feeling that her comfort is cared for, will help to make her better. In calculating the expense of furnishing a house, the servant's room should invariably be included; and if you cannot at once buy all that is set down in the List at the end of this volume, you can by contrivance and some trouble manage to provide her everything necessary except a good bed. That you will have

to buy, for this to her is the most important of all, and a home-made mattress is generally a very poor affair when made out of old materials, and if you buy the hair and ticking, it will cost more than the mattress ready made; for the upholsterer purchases his materials at so much less than you can that he can afford to make up a mattress and sell it to you for what he would ask you for the hair that is put in it, and make a good profit.

Straw is too uncomfortable for an upper bed. Husks are better, but are not by any means soft. Cotton and wool mattresses, if made by an upholsterer, are more comfortable for a little while, but they soon get lumpy. The latter are a good deal used in England, but judging from the descriptions and advice given in English Household books of quite recent date, the middle classes of that country have yet to learn what constitutes a really good bed. Americans, being Sybarites in this matter, have reached perfection as nearly as our present knowledge allows. What luxurious couches may be reserved for the future we cannot, of course, know; but our noiseless elastic springs, and cool, clean, light hair mattresses are exquisitely comfortable. We have universally adopted the low French bedstead, and we believe that we are indebted to them for the spring mattress which suggested the different arrangements of springs now made. The spring mattresses are almost out of use. They soon got out of order, were difficult to put in order again, and afforded safe refuges to bugs.

The bedstead for your servant's room is not of much importance except that it should be low, and should screw so tightly together that bugs cannot get into the

cracks. Very good single bedsteads of wood or iron can be purchased from four to six dollars. For three dollars you can fit it with a set of springs. If you get a husk or wool mattress it will be more comfortable laid right on the springs than with a straw bed under it. The same may be said of a hair mattress. Hard hair is best, but the soft hair wears very well, and is ten cents a pound cheaper. A single mattress of the former will cost about fourteen dollars, but it will last for years before it will have to be "made over," and then, with perhaps the addition of a little hair, can be made as good as ever, and serve for another term of years. A mattress of soft hair will cost from ten to twelve dollars.

Mattresses in this room, and also in all the bedrooms, should be furnished with covers that can be taken off and washed. A blue cotton check, at twelve and fifteen cents a yard, is sold expressly for this purpose.

Allow for the bed three pairs of cotton sheets, each one and a half yards wide, and two and a quarter long. Cotton at twenty-five cents is very good for this purpose. As there is but one pillow, three pillow cases will be sufficient. A pair of thick all-wool blankets of sufficiently fine quality, can be bought for five or six dollars. These, with the addition of a neat cotton coverlet, will complete the bed furnishing, except that in very cold weather a comfortable may be needed.

A table with a small looking-glass hung over it, will answer for toilet purposes, though a bureau is to be preferred. There should also be a wash-stand and its furniture, and a low, cane-seated rocking-chair will be a comfortable addition.

Rag carpeting for the floor will cost a dollar a yard,

and can be bought in very pretty stripes. An American Ingrain with cotton chain will cost no more, and will look much prettier at first, but is not to be recommended for wear.

Or the floor can be stained, and strips of carpet laid by bedstead and bureau ; or a small square in the centre of the room.

It is better not to paper the walls, but to have them whitewashed twice a year.

At the windows hang Holland shades, or curtains of pretty calico that is light in color, and that will not fade in the wash.

PART IV.

HEATING THE HOUSE.

So many houses, both in city and country, are now supplied with furnaces or fire-place heaters, that stoves are not usually included in Furnishing Lists. For this reason we have said nothing about them in our remarks on furnishing; and also for the better reason that there is no article of household use of which it is so difficult to speak particularly as stoves, so great is the variety, and so diverse the reasons for which each is recommended. Indeed, to visit a large stove warehouse, one would scarcely believe there were such things as furnaces and fire-place heaters, but would certainly come to the conclusion that the whole world used stoves. Forty varieties of cooking stoves, and nearly thirty of parlor stoves, may be seen at one establishment—positive proofs that furnaces in the cellar, and ranges built into kitchen fire-places, are not, by any means, the rule in American homes. To define all these styles, and point out their separate advantages, is, of course, impossible in this book. And yet we cannot pass over in silence such an important matter as heating the house.

To keep the whole house warm, used to be considered very unhealthful. What particular advantage there was in going from one heated room to another through a cold entry, or from the torrid zone of the sitting-room into the frigid atmosphere of the bedroom, where one had to depend upon his own supply of animal heat to keep the bed warm, and was afrair to stick his nose out of the blanket to encounter the cold air, it is difficult to see. Doubtless our ancestors thought that warmth was enervating, but the rooms that they did heat were at the very highest temperature; enough, it would seem to us, to deprive the strongest man of his strength. We would not thus call in question the wisdom of our progenitors, if the same idea did not linger in the minds of some of their descendants. There are persons now who will keep two or three rooms at a temperature of ninety degrees, while all the rest of the house is as cold as a vault. This is neither comfortable nor healthful.

Furnaces are greatly praised by some, and decried by others. "So healthy," say the first, "just the air for the lungs—so clean, no dust and ashes in the rooms, so economical of fuel—so little trouble, with only the one fire to attend to—rooms look so pretty without the ugly stoves." "Such dry, unwholesome heat," say the latter, "and terrible for weak lungs—a great trouble, for the fire is never just right, and if the room is cold, we have to go down one or two pairs of stairs to see what is the matter, and the servant never attends to it properly—such extravagance in the use of fuel, just as much required whether to heat one room or six—the rooms are so cheerless and ugly, with no bright fire." It is surprising how such totally opposite conclusions can be arrived at in regard to any practical thing.

Where people of equally good sense and sound judgment so widely disagree, the inexperienced are somewhat at a loss what to do.

For ourselves, we think, on the whole, a house is better heated, in a sanitary sense, by a furnace, because all the walls are kept dry, which is a matter of very great importance. At the same time, we admit that the direct heat is dry and disagreeable, and probably not as healthful altogether as the stove heat, and certainly less so than that from an open fire. For bedrooms that are only used as sleeping-rooms, the furnace is desirable because the room can be kept at a lower temperature than a sitting-room, and still be warm, and all dampness kept out, and the heat can so easily be shut out at night. The servant's room can also be warmed by a register, and generally servants are not to be trusted with stoves.

We would secure the advantages of a furnace, and obviate its disadvantages by having open fire-places in all the rooms, so that they can be used whenever desired, and by using them regularly in the sitting-room, and dining-room ; burning in them either wood or coal, as preferred. We would thus use more fuel, it is true, but the difference would not be great, for the furnace fire must be kept so low that the temperature of the house shall not rise above sixty degrees, and thus fuel will be saved there. This we regard as the most desirable way of heating a house for comfort, health, and pleasantness.

Where parlors and sitting-rooms are not occupied until the evening, and dining-rooms only during the meals, wood will be found the cheapest fuel, even in places where it sells at high prices. For a wood fire

can be made with but little trouble, and will so speedily become a bright blaze that it will need only be kept burning while the room is occupied. A few sticks of wood will make a cheerful fire during a whole meal, and change the dry atmosphere of the room into a more healthful one ; and it will not require much wood to keep up a fire the whole evening in a room where the air is already tempered by furnace heat.

Instead of open fires, stoves can be put up in these rooms, and used in the same way ; but half of the cheerfulness and brightness of a room in winter is driven out when the fire-place is closed.

The secret of regulating a furnace-fire so that the heat shall be uniform throughout the day, lies in the simple fact that it must be attended to systematically. When you have so arranged the fire that for one day the heat has been uniform, and of the temperature you desire, attend to it always thereafter in the same way precisely. This seems like a foolish direction to give, as it is so self-evident, but it is the very thing many housekeepers never learn, not only in regard to fires, but everything else. They do not even make the same kind of pie exactly alike two days in succession.

Many country houses are so built that it is not safe to introduce furnaces into them. But fire-place heaters can be put into any house. These are stoves set inside the fire-place with pipes running up to the rooms above, into which the heat is introduced by means of registers. Three rooms can thus be comfortably heated with one fire. These stoves are of different kinds, and vary in size to suit large or small rooms, and cost from seventy-five to ninety dollars to put up with pipes, registers and all complete.

With forty, and perhaps more, different kinds of cooking stoves from which to make a choice it would seem as if every housekeeper could be suited. The fault with most of them is that there is no place for roasting meats, and a great many have no proper conveniences for broiling. When you are buying, look out for these things ; and see also that it does not burn fuel to waste ; that the oven is properly situated for heating with no great addition of fuel, and that the stove has a revolving grate, so that it can be readily cleaned out. A cooking-stove for a medium-sized family will cost about eighteen dollars, and so on, down to twelve, and up to twenty-five. They are sold with or without the proper pots and kettles.

The self-feeding base-burners are very popular parlor stoves. The coal is poured into a funnel-shaped receptacle which is in the top of the stove, and drops slowly from the mouth of this funnel on to the fire below as the coal burns out, and the fire "settles." This saves trouble, as the receptacle has to be filled only once a day. The ordinary sizes for families are from fifteen to thirty dollars.

Very pretty open stoves are sold for parlors, bedrooms, etc. They are furnished with grates, and in most of them either wood or coal can be used. A small size, suitable for a bedroom, can be bought for six dollars, and the medium sizes are from eight to twelve.

The old and familiar gas-burner stoves still retain their popularity, and are from nine to fifteen dollars.

These are only a few of the great variety of coal stoves, and there are also quite a number of different manufactures of wood stoves. These range from five and six dollars up to twenty.

In whatever way you heat your house, try to have an open fire in the family sitting-room, if it is possible. A wood fire is much to be preferred, but coal will do. It will not cost very much, and the little extra trouble it gives is not to be compared with the enjoyment the family will all derive from it, to say nothing of the positive advantage of keeping the air pure and sweet.

PART V.

KEEPING THE HOUSE.

SERVANTS.

These seem to be regarded as necessary evils, and yet they should be comforts. Many a beginner in housekeeping exclaims, "I can get along with everything but the servants, and I look forward to contests with them with real dread." Our servants are, as a rule, inefficient, careless, and unskillful, and very independent of the good opinion of their mistresses. But, if you are so fortunate as to get a good servant, and, if you inquire into her history, you will generally find that her *first* mistress knew how to train her and to win her respect and affection. The treatment that a girl receives in the first two or three years of service, and the teaching that she then has, determine the whole future character of her service. A great deal can be done with a servant who comes to you young and inexperienced ; and something can be done with an older one who has passed through years of mismanagement, by being a little forbearing with her faults, and kindly pointing them out to her, instead of sending her away in a week.

If you can once get a servant to regard you as her friend, your task is half done. At present there seems

to be an antagonism between mistress and maid—the mistress looks upon the maid as some curious sort of animal, entirely different from herself, for whom she must be constantly on the watch ; and the maid regards the mistress as an enemy, of whom she is to take every possible advantage. You can never make a friend of your servant by treating her familiarly, and joking and gossiping with her. She may, at first, be pleased with this, but she will lose her respect for you, and the engagement is almost sure to end in a bitter quarrel. The best way is to regard her as a member of the family, to whom is due a certain amount of consideration and attention, and from whom you demand in return consideration for your wishes, and obedience to the rules of the house.

Suppose that you had with you a young girl, the daughter of a friend, would you allow her to form associates of whom you knew nothing, and to go out in the evening with young men, and stay until nearly midnight, without knowing where she was going, and the character of her escort? Extend, then, the same surveillance and authority over the young servant girl, who is as much a member of your family as your young lady visitor, without the careful culture to keep her from evil ; and who, perhaps, has not a friend in the whole country capable of advising her. She will resent it, you say. That is very probable. Young girls, of all classes, resent the authority that interferes with their pleasures. But that is not a sufficient reason for giving them a loose rein to do as they please.

When your servant goes out in the evening, insist upon her return before the regular hour of closing the house ; and, if she is young, inform yourself of the

character of her associates, and what families she visits. Teach her how to dress in a neat and becoming manner. Show her how to select goods, and to harmonize colors; and, if possible, sometimes go shopping with her. Take some pains to induce her to safely invest her surplus money, instead of spending it on cheap jewelry, and cotton laces. Put into her mind the ambition to excel in her art, not only because it is a good thing to do in itself, but that she may make money. This is an incentive in all other trades, why not in this? If you do all this with the right feeling in your heart, and in a kindly manner, depend upon it your servant will appreciate it at its proper value, although she may be a little refractory at first, and you will reap your reward in securing to yourself a zealous and skillful helper, and a faithful and attached friend.

The usual plan pursued by mistresses is to leave a girl entirely alone, to dress and act as she may please, and choose what companions she will, so long as her work is done. The train of evils that follow is only what might be expected. The girl chooses to spend her leisure time with gay companions, and is very apt to form improper associates; gets more and more fond of pleasure, and consequently loses ambition about her work; grows slatternly, lazy, indifferent, and impudent; and the mistress sends her away, and says, "I knew it would be so! She gave promise, at first, of making a good servant, but the truth is, they are all bad alike."

The girl thus turned away gets a half-hearted recommendation from her mistress, and soon finds another home, which she speedily leaves; and thus she drifts about from place to place at medium wages, which

grow less as she gets older, or she marries some fellow as thriftless as herself.

Some ladies do not allow any "followers" at all, but this is going into the other extreme. An occasional visit from a young man of good principles will do your servant no harm. It helps a servant very far towards doing well when her mistress takes an interest in whatever most engages her thoughts and affections. She has her hopes and ambitions; her cares and sorrows; and, above all, she has her family ties; and sympathy and affectionate interest are as dear to her as to other women.

Try, too, as far as your means will allow, to make your servant comfortable. It must be somewhat discouraging to a woman who has finished a hard day's work to go up on a cold winter's night to her room where the temperature is forty degrees, and to go shivering to sleep on a "lumpy" mattress on which she could not sleep at all if she were not so tired. And, even if your means are somewhat straitened, you can, by the exercise of a little ingenuity, manufacture articles of furniture that will be quite comfortable, and will give the room an attractive appearance. Above all, she should have a good bed.

But these matters are treated of more fully elsewhere in this volume, and it is only necessary to add that, if possible, some way should be contrived of warming the servant's room in winter. Unless you have one that you know you can trust, and that you have good reason to think will remain some time with you, it would not do to put a stove in the room; but in these days of furnaces, and fire-place heaters, it will be only a trifling expense to carry the heat from some part of

the house into the servant's room through the safe mediums of a pipe and a register.

In this country, where there is such diversity in ways of living and expense of living; where the population is crowded in some places, and sparse in others; servants' wages necessarily vary so widely that it would be impossible to have a fixed scale that would apply everywhere. And, in fact, the scale is more evenly balanced than it would seem at first sight, for, in the many localities where the compensation is small, the cost of living is also small, and servants are allowed certain privileges that enable them to do quite as well as those in other places where wages are much higher But a great deal may be said of the *comparative scale of prices* in each locality, and it is a lamentable fact that, with few exceptions in our household service, unskilled labor commands very nearly as high wages as the skilled. This is especially true of female servants. Here and there will be found an exceptionally fine cook, nursemaid, or laundress, who will command exceptionally high wages. But, in most cases, an ignorant, untidy girl, who has never learned to do any one thing exactly as it should be done, and who, moreover, does not care to learn, will ask and get very nearly, if not quite, the same amount per month that is given to a fairly good servant, who is tidy and careful, and anxious to do well. It is true that the latter is likely to keep the place, and the former to lose it, but she does not much care, for she soon finds another at the same price. This seems like offering a premium to ignorance and carelessness. And certainly no man could expect to prosper in business who paid to thriftless, careless, ignorant assistants the same salaries that he gave to

skilled and competent men. It is well known, too, that the prospect of increased salaries is a great incentive to the ignorant and careless to do better. But what inducement have our servants to improve when they get paid at first as much as they can ever hope to receive? It is difficult to point out a remedy for this evil, which is really the foundation of much household mismanagement. Nothing can be done in such a case by individual effort. The only way would be for housekeepers to coöperate in fixing a scale of wages suited to the particular locality, and to pay servants in proportion to their skill.

The time allowed servants as their own also depends a great deal upon the customs of each section; and upon some other contingencies, such as the number of servants in a family, the hours for meals, and the style in which the family live. But, as a general thing, good management on the part of the mistress will give a servant nearly all of her evenings. She is on hand, if wanted, but she needs her evenings for rest from physical labor, and to do her sewing, in order that she may present that tidy appearance upon which you insist. And some part of every Sunday should be allowed her, and an occasional afternoon or evening for visiting her friends.

Something must be trusted to the honesty of servants. It is troublesome to lock up every pound of sugar, butter, etc., and dole it out in the exact proportions in which it should be used. These proportions cannot always be estimated to the grain, or the fraction of an ounce. You cannot be sure that the new barrel of flour, or bag of coffee is precisely, in every respect, like the last. And, besides, it is questionable if this

practice does not injure the servant out of all proportion to the small gain to the mistress. A really dishonest servant no one would wish to keep, and pilfering from these small stores will soon be detected, and followed by dismissal. They will sometimes use articles a little more freely, perhaps, than you would give them out. But they cannot waste much if the mistress is at all observant; and, as was said in the opening of this paragraph, some trust must be placed in them.

But the large supplies should, by all means, be kept under lock and key. Many persons who are honest under small temptations cannot withstand great ones, and a servant who has free access to a barrel of flour, and bag of coffee, and box of tea, might be tempted to take a little sometimes. She knows that it is not likely to be missed from so much. And there are generally evil and greedy counsellors among her associates to whom she confides the fact that she lives where there is an open store-room. But it is not only for this reason that the store-room door should be locked. If you are sure that you can trust your servant not to take a grain, we should still say: Lock up the store-room. You do not know what day you may lose your servant, and replace her with one of whom you know nothing. If it is your usual habit to keep the door of the store-room locked, the servants will not feel it a hardship, and will not complain. It is the most orderly way of housekeeping. Your store-room and its contents are then entirely under your own control—there is no wondering where things are, no waste, no confusion, and, what is better than all, no cause for suspicion.

ARRANGING THE WORK OF THE HOUSE.

The work must be reduced to a system. If it is done in a hap-hazard, whatever-comes-uppermost fashion, both mistress and servant will always be at work. System is necessary, whether you have one servant or half a dozen, and, in the latter case, it is impossible to get along without it. But, where you have only one or two, it is best not to trust to them to do their allotted work, just as it seems convenient to them, for even experienced servants, who work well, seldom are good planners. That is not the business they have learned, and they expect to be directed. You know the wants and ways of all the members of your household, what little comforts they desire, and their hours for pleasure and business. So you are the one to arrange the work in such a manner that it will fit in snugly and comfortably with all these needs, and duties and pleasures. For this fact must not be lost sight of—that housekeeping is the art of *making a home*—it does not consist in keeping a house spotlessly clean, or getting the most work done in a given time, or in perpetually making something to tempt the appetite, or in straining every nerve to save money. Neatness and industry, and good wholesome cooking and economy, all belong to housekeeping, but everything must be made subservient to the grand central idea—so difficult to define even with many words, but so easily understood when expressed in one—*home.*

It is comparatively easy to arrange the work so as to get a great deal done in a very short time, if you choose to make everything bend to that. But it is by no means easy to mark out a system that shall suit the

peculiarities of the master of the house, (for every man cherishes an ideal of household comfort, and in his own house he naturally expects to realize it,) that shall give the children comfort and pleasure ; that will not prove a restraint to your guests ; that will not keep your servant in a flurry and worry, and will give her some leisure time ; and that will enable you to give some portion of your time and thoughts to other matters than housekeeping. It is not easy, but it can be done. It will require time, patience, love, and some experience. Even after you have it marked out, it will have to be changed and modified, possibly abandoned altogether, and another commenced ; but at last you will bring it as nearly to perfection as anything can be in this sublunary world. And, once fixed, it will last your lifetime, unless your circumstances change greatly.

But, after your system is fixed, and in good working order, do not fall into the mistake of thinking that nothing will ever interfere with it. That would be making a discipline and a burden of what should be a comfort ; and, instead of a home you will have a sort of House of Correction. For a fearful thing under the sun is one of those excessively neat and systematic housekeepers that will not allow her arrangements to be put out of joint the least bit, not even by her husband, who has, most likely, bought everything the house contains, nor by dear little Charlie, or Mary, whose happiness and love is worth more than all the household systems ever contrived. You must expect things to be "put about" sometimes for the accommodation of different members of your household, but it will not be for long, and the machine will run just as smoothly as ever as soon as the brakes are up.

It is evident from the foregoing remarks that no housekeeper can arrange a system of work that will be exactly adapted to another, but the following rough plan is offered as a suggestion to be filled up, altered, or changed altogether, as may suit the convenience of each household :

PLAN OF WORK FOR THE WEEK.

MONDAY.

This is the almost universal washing day of America. Housekeepers like to begin the week by doing the heaviest work, that it may be off their minds ; and there is a feeling that the soiled clothes must be got out of the way as soon as possible. Therefore Monday has become a household bugbear. Slop and suds all day in the neighborhood of the kitchen, a soapy atmosphere all through the house ; a " picked-up " dinner, the mistress hard at work, heated and worried ; the children in mischief, and the husband wondering what demon of misrule invented wash-days. Where there are servants enough to release the mistress from helping with the work wash-day is something less of an evil, but still bad enough to be dreaded by all the family. Now by changing the day to Tuesday, and by making all the preparations for the great event on Monday, this terrible ordeal may be so simplified and systematically carried out as to cause little or no annoyance.

Therefore in our plan, Monday is not washing day,

but a day for doing odd jobs, such as washing windows, brightening the silver, cleaning stair-rods, etc., etc. A host of them will come crowding into the housekeeper's mind, and she will find that the day is not long enough to get them all done, and some must take their turn on the next Monday. There is that closet you have so long been anxious should be cleaned ; that jar of preserves to be attended to, or they will spoil ; and various incidental matters of this kind in addition to the "odd jobs." Monday will be a busy and a much valued day. It is a good time to select for all these extras, just after the rest of Sunday, and before the regular rush of the week's housework begins.

But you must save time from this work that your servant may, towards evening, help you to prepare the clothes for the next day's wash. Direct her to divide them into three parcels, the fine, the more common, but not much soiled, and the really dirty. While this is being done you can put down on your list the number of articles of each kind. It is well to do this, even with honest servants, for, if anything is missing, the owner is sure to insist that it was lost in the wash, and the list will at once show whether the charge is correct. Have ready three tubs of cold, soft water, and put in the clothes, having first rubbed soap over the parts most soiled, and leave them to soak all night. Then have the wash-boiler rinsed out, set on the back of the stove or range, and filled nearly two thirds with cold soft water.

TUESDAY.

As soon as the breakfast is served, the boiler must be removed to the front of the stove. When the water

boils, put into it half a teacup of washing fluid,* and a piece of hard soap, about two inches square, cut into shavings. Put in the fine clothes, and boil them twenty minutes. Take out with as little water as possible, and without wringing, put into clear, cold water. If there are any soiled spots remaining on the clothes, they should be rubbed out before wringing from this water into the bluing water. The tub of bluing water is set near the other, so that the articles shall fall into it from the wringer.

Put your second division of clothes into the boiler, in the same water from which the fine things were taken, and repeat the same process ; but, if you have a third boiler full, it will be better to prepare fresh water.

Take the clothes out of the blue water, and rinse in cold, soft water, wring out, and hang out to dry.†

With this plan of washing, and fair weather, the clothes will all be hung out by noon, unless the wash is very large, and the servant will have the afternoon for cleaning up the kitchen and wash-room, putting away the tubs, boiler, etc, and making herself tidy. In the evening, the fine clothes and most of the starched things are to be sprinkled and folded, ready for ironing, and the bread is to be "set," for the next day's baking.

WEDNESDAY.

The baking this morning need not be as large as that done on Saturday, and it should be done as early as the morning work will allow, so that the servant may not be hurried in beginning the ironing, and do

* Directions for making washing fluid, page 113.

† For further directions in regard to washing, see page 148

her work badly. She can easily do the ordinary fine ironing of a family and her other work in this part of a day. But, if there is much ruffling on ladies' dresses, and fine work on children's clothes, it will require a whole day's hard work to do it, and, in such a case, the mistress should hire some one to assist, or do all the ordinary housework herself. In the evening, the plainer and coarser clothes are to be sprinkled, and folded for ironing.

THURSDAY.

In the morning the ironing is to be finished. Where it is stipulated in the bargain that the servant should have half a day every week, this is the best afternoon to give her. It is the leisure interval between ironing and sweeping ; and, as it is the day usually given by housekeepers, it enables the girl to meet her friends when she goes out.

FRIDAY.

Besides the every day sweeping, dusting, and putting to rights, it is necessary to devote one day in the week to this special duty, and Friday suits best for the purpose. The sitting-room, dining-room, halls, and stairways must be swept often, but once a week will be found generally sufficient for the rest of the house. To do this thoroughly and well will require the whole of a day in addition to the ordinary work. In the evening the bread must be set to rise for the next day's baking.

SATURDAY.

This is the busiest day of the week. There is the regular morning work; then the baking ; then the

scrubbing and scouring. [It has been shown in a former part of this work that much scrubbing, which is now thought necessary, may be avoided, but still there are some things that must be scrubbed, only let there be as little of it as possible.] And the latter part of the day should be occupied in preparing everything for the next day, so that Sunday shall be a day of rest for all as far as practicable. The whole breakfast can be so arranged as to occupy but very few minutes in cooking, and, in winter, nearly everything for dinner can be prepared ; and, in summer, most things will keep well on ice, or in a cool cellar. The Sunday dessert can always be made on Saturday. But do not let the Saturday's work run into the evening.

SUNDAY.

Do no work at all on this day, except what is actually necessary for comfort—"thou, nor thy servant." If you see a dusty corner, or a dim window pane, let it alone until the next day. Some putting of things to rights there must be, some making of beds and cooking. But there is no need of getting up especially elaborate dinners on this day, and, if Saturday afternoon has been employed as it should have been, your cooking will not occupy very much time. But don't be pharisaical about the work, accounting some work desperately wicked, and others sinless. There are people who will stuff a turkey and roast it, and cook three or four vegetables, and stew cranberry sauce for dinner, and yet will not make up a pan of biscuit for supper, (an operation that requires but a few minutes,) because, forsooth, "it is wicked to work in flour on Sundays!" This is only one of a dozen senseless ideas of the same

kind. The idea is not that any particular kind of work is in itself sinful on this day, but that it is the day set apart for Christian worship, and you and your family desire to attend church ; and to have the servant attend also, and, if there were no higher principles involved, all creatures need a rest one day in seven.

This plan is intended for families where but one servant is kept, but if there are two, the same system will be found to work well, only in that case, the mistress need do but little of the work herself. The servants are her hands, but she must think for them, and this is no light task. And then, too, there is the constant oversight of everything. This is absolutely necessary with our present race of servants. You may teach Bridget how to wash dishes properly, (a thing, by-the-way, that almost all servants do very badly,) and having watched her a dozen times, and become convinced that she understands every detail, if you neglect her for a month, you will find that the plates begin to feel "sticky," and the glasses to look "cloudy," and if you then come upon her unawares, while at this task, you will find that she does scarcely a single thing as you directed her. It is not necessary to overlook every part of the work every day—one might almost as well do it one's self—but the servant must feel that she is not to be left to herself to do the work her way, but that you require it to be done your way, and that you intend to see that your wishes are attended to ; and then, too, you must cultivate your habit of observation, that you may take in things at a glance. There is an old, true proverb, "The eye of a master is worth both his hands." So

far from overlooking everything every day, it is best not to do it, for this necessitates being in the kitchen a great deal, and that is a bad thing both for your servant and yourself. Your time can be much more valuably employed elsewhere ; and such constant talking, directing, and helping lessens your servant's respect for you. There is always a point, beyond which it is best not to go.

Unnecessary helping of servants with their work is injurious to them in every way, besides tending to mako them dissatisfied, for they are much happier when fully employed. This is very different from being overworked. Where there is but one servant in a family of two or three persons, the mistress will have to help a little, and if the family consists of five or six, she will have to do the lighter work, for the heavy work will be as much as one girl can manage properly. But two girls can do the work of such a family with ease. Employing too many servants leads to idleness among them, and all its attendant evils.

The essential point in having the work of the house done without hurry and jar is that the servants should rise early. That they may do this, and get as much sleep as they need, encourage them to go to bed early. There is very little for them to do in the evenings, and no good reason for their sitting up late. But, unless the business of the master of the house requires an early breakfast, there is no need that the mistress should rise early. It is often considered a mark of a poor housekeeper to remain in bed until eight o'clock on a winter's morning, when, in fact, this has nothing whatever to do with the matter. Sometimes early rising is a duty, from the nature of the family occupations, and

in such cases every one should retire early, for want of sufficient sleep is a fruitful source of nervous diseases. But in many families there is no such reason for early rising, and to them the evening is the happiest time—father, mother, children, brothers, sisters, and friends are all united in a delightful home circle—and they naturally desire to prolong the evening as far as they reasonably can. And going to bed late necessitates a later rising. Some housekeepers who sit up late, and feel that it is an essential of good housekeeping to rise early, try to make up the deficiency by sleeping in the afternoon ; but this seems something like the famous expedient of the Irish woman, who, in order to make her dress longer, cut a piece off the top, and sewed it to the bottom.

The servants have not the same duties to keep them up late at night, and it *is* part of their duty to you to rise early, and do their allotted work. You can easily find out, when you do get up, whether they have done their work, and have done it well.

WASHING AND IRONING.

Every year, it would seem that the washing and ironing becomes more and more of a burden to housekeepers. Our grandmothers, apparently, did not think much of it, for they had no machines, patent wringers, or wonderful magic soaps, and they arose at day dawn, and set themselves or their maids at the wash-tubs, and did their work in the hardest possible way without complaint, so far as we know. But their rubbing, and slopping, and pounding,* made "wash-day" quite as great a bugbear to the male members of the family as it

* The clothes, after being taken from the boiler, were pounded in a barrel.

is at this time, and a house pervaded by hot, soapy steam was no more agreeable to our grandfathers than it is to our husbands and brothers, judging from the doleful plaints of this famous institution, they wrought into both prose and poetry. But we are not as strong as our grandmothers; our occupations are more varied, our style of living entirely different, and to us the washing and ironing is the *bête noire* of housekeeping. The ironing is especially tedious in these days of puffing, crimping, and fluting of bias tucks and interminable lengths of ruffling. Where there is but one servant, even with a hired washerwoman, the mistress has to do very nearly all the other work of the house for two, and perhaps three days of the week; and, with two servants, a good deal has to be done to help them out. Usually a woman is hired to come for a day to do all, or the heaviest part of the washing, and then, all day long, the kitchen and wash-room are in a mess and a clutter, (to use technical terms,) a perpetual chatting goes on between the hired woman and the servants; they all seem demoralized for that day, giving the mistress an impudent stare when she comes into the kitchen, as much as to say, "What business have you here?" The woman has her own way of washing, and very often it is not a good way, and she will not change it to please you. She will rub the clothes to pieces on a washboard; she will let the flannels lie in dirty suds; she will put a great piece of soda into the tub whenever your back is turned. And then she so often disappoints you—she has a job of house-cleaning, or somebody is sick, or she is detained in the country. And sometimes she comes to you half-tipsy. In short, the hired washerwoman may be voted a nuisance.

To escape these evils, there is the alternative of giving the clothes to the washerwoman that she may do the washing and ironing at her own house. This plan certainly adds very much to the comfort of the family. Everything smiles serene until the clothes come home torn, streaked, "rough dry," spots on shirt bosoms, and linen collars, smeared ruffles, and a general air of "mussiness" pervading the whole basket; for the woman who washed badly at your house will not do any better at her own. This description of the clothes-basket may seem an overdrawn picture to those who have never "put the washing out," but most housekeepers will recognize it as faithful. For there is no work that women undertake to do that is, as a general rule, done so badly as the washing and ironing. A washerwoman who perfectly understands her business is such a treasure in the city that she is out of the reach of people of moderate means, for she can command any price she pleases to ask. It might be supposed that the demand for good work would create the supply, but this rule does not seem to hold good in regard to any branch of housework. In country places it is difficult to get washerwomen of any kind, good or bad.

Putting the washing out has also another disadvantage, which is a very serious one—it is very costly. All the household linen added to the various articles of wearing apparel make a long list. Some lessen the expense by having the smaller articles, or the coarser clothing, done at home by the servant, but this takes nearly two days of her time, and gives us two *bêtes noires*, one outside of the house, and one in.

Clothes sent to a really good laundry to be done up will come back to you looking so dainty and attractive

that it is a pleasure to lift them out of the basket—until you come across the bill! Of all the present contrivances for doing the washing and ironing, there is none so comfortable, so satisfactory, and so costly as this.

A word or two in regard to washing-machines. Some of these are admirable, and a family without a servant should by all means have one, for it will prove to be a great saving of strength and time. But, somehow, servants and washing-machines do not seem to get along well together. A few of the more intelligent like them, and use them properly, but the majority, strange to say, do not like them at all, and generally contrive to get them out of order after using for a few weeks.

When we consider the great trouble that the washing and ironing is in a family, the difficulty of securing the services of hired women who are competent for this work, and the cost of the public laundries, is it not surprising that housekeepers do not club together, and establish laundries of their own? For several years now this plan has been advocated by writers on household matters, and housekeepers have recognized the plan as a desirable one; but, as yet, we have not heard that it has ever been put into practice. The trouble and expense of organizing such a laundry on a scale as large as is generally recommended probably deters ladies from undertaking it. The expense and trouble would, however, be found to be less after the first year. But it is not necessary to build up a coöperative system on any extensive scale. Let half a dozen families in a city rent a room in some locality where rents are moderate, and yet not too far to be conveniently visited. A rather large room, and one already supplied with hot

and cold water, should be selected. The additional cost of stationary wash-tubs, boilers, ironing-tables, etc., will not be great, or they might be furnished from the private kitchens and laundries of the club. Two good washers and ironers hired by the month, will, probably, be found sufficient for the work. If the ironing is very difficult, extra help might be hired on certain days of every week. In so many families are generally to be found some ladies with nothing particular to do, who will gladly undertake the superintendence of the laundry by turns, or each one can take charge of some particular thing. Each family to pay so much per week for number of pieces, the price, of course, to be fixed according to the expense of conducting the laundry. This will be found to cost each family about the same as it would to hire a woman to come to the house to do the work, but all the vexation and trouble will be saved. But a more economical plan, and one that will be found to work much better, would be for the half dozen families to organize themselves into a society, with president, treasurer, etc., and to deposit in the hands of the treasurer a certain sum monthly or quarterly in advance, (this tax, of course, to bear a proportion to the number of pieces sent by each family,) and let this common fund be used for all expenses of rent, fuel, servants' hire, etc., including the salary of a superintendent. It will be easy to find women willing to undertake this latter office, and to do it well, for a very reasonable salary—women who are now wearing their lives out in doing sewing very badly that pays them miserably. This plan may seem an extravagant one at the first glance, but, on trial, will be found cheap, especially to large families. Increase the number of

families to twenty, and the expenses will decrease in proportion.

In the country, where the washerwomen do not expect hot and cold water, and stationary tubs to their hand, this plan will be attended with very little expense. Rooms rent for a low price, and the ladies can furnish tubs, irons, tables, etc., from their own houses. Perhaps in both city and country the greatest difficulty will be in finding women competent to do the work well. There will be plenty willing to undertake it, who could not be induced to "hire out" to private families; but, as we have before stated, there are but few washerwomen who understand their business. But they will do their work much better in an establishment where they must conform to certain fixed rules, and where each has her allotted task, than when left to their own devices, and practice and constant supervision will soon make them comparatively skillful.

If washing is done in the house, it should be according to a system, and the work should be so regulated as to make as little trouble and annoyance as possible. The plan suggested in "Arranging the work of the House" will be found easy and practicable.

The washing-fluid there referred to is made in the following manner:

Put into a *brass* kettle (tin and iron are corroded by the action of the soda) sixteen quarts of soft water, four pounds of washing-soda, and a piece of lime the size of a hen's egg. Boil until reduced to fourteen quarts, when pour off, as clearly as possible, into bottles, cool, and cork tightly, and set away for future use.

This fluid does not injure clothes in the slightest degree, *if properly used;* and it cleans them without

wash-board scrubbing, which *does* injure them ; and it helps to whiten them. Half a teacup is sufficient for a medium-sized boiler. Let the housekeeper measure this out to the washerwoman, for if she is allowed access to it she will certainly use it too freely, under the impression that it will save her trouble.

It is a good plan, especially in winter, to wash the flannels first in the morning, as they will dry more quickly if hung out while the sun is hot. Quick washing, and rinsing in hot water, and quick drying are all necessary to keep flannels from shrinking. Shake them out, and do not wring them. Colored and white flannels should be washed separately. Colored lawns, calicoes, etc., if washed in the ordinary way, are passed through two rinsing waters. It is best not to rub soap on them. A good way of doing up such dresses (and the only one where they show a tendency to fade) is to wash them in starch water, using no soap, except on those very much soiled. The starch cleanses them, and preserves the colors. A pound of flour starch will be sufficient to put in water enough to wash two or three dresses. This recipe, however, does not suit black calicoes very well. The color is preserved, but the starch gives them a dusty and smeared look. These calicoes are very difficult to wash in any way to make them look fresh and new. A good housekeeper recommends that a tea-cup of weak lye be put in the water in which they are washed, and that they be starched in the water in which pared potatoes have been boiled, which will stiffen them without making them look smeared.

Sugar is best for starching laces—a lump or two dropped into cold water. A teaspoonful of coffee added to it will give that yellow tinge which is desirable be-

cause it imparts to the lace an appearance of softness and richness.

After ironing, the clothes should be well dried before putting away.

THE MEALS.

It is not the purpose of this book to treat of cooking, or to give details of what is best for us to eat and drink. These things have already been treated of in two volumes of this Series.* But a few things will bear repetition, and some remarks under the above head come properly only within the scope of this work.

There has recently been much discussion about the proper hours for the three meals that we, in this country, take every day, but the fact is that the hours for meals cannot be fixed arbitrarily. They must vary with the occupations and habits of different families. The farmer, the mechanic, and the laboring man take their breakfasts very early; the merchant takes his a little later; and the student has his later still. All need some kind of a mid-day meal, and whether it shall be dinner or lunch must be decided by their own judgment and experience. It is now thought most healthful to take the heaviest meal after the day's work is done, and this is doubtless best where it does not conflict with other rules of health; but it will not do for a man who finishes his work at six in the evening, and goes to bed at eight, to eat his dinner after his day's work is done. There would be no time before sleep in which to digest a heavy meal. It will be best for him to have his dinner at twelve o'clock, take as long a rest

* "What Shall we Eat?" and "Eating and Drinking."

after it as he can, and to eat a comparatively light supper. But for persons whose business does not require them to rise early, who sit up late, and work hard during their working hours, a rather substantial lunch at mid-day, and dinner at five or six is the most healthful. But the meals should be partaken of regularly at the hours fixed upon.

The kind of food is of more importance than the hours at which it is to be taken. But this, too, must in some degree be adapted to the wants of different classes of people. A farmer thinks it best for him to have what he calls plain fare, but a merchant or professional man would consider this to be coarse, heavy, unpalatable food. And, considering the great proportion of dyspeptics among farmers, it is a question whether such a "plain fare" is best for them after all. Because it answered "in the good old times" it does not follow that it is suitable to the present. The progress of civilization has changed us physically, as well as mentally, and we need our food more daintly prepared, and more delicately served, than our ancestors liked it. The fried meats, fatty gravies, heavy boiled puddings, and tough pie crusts on which they throve would certainly give us the dyspepsia if our stomachs would allow us to eat them, but, fortunately, we turn from them all with disgust. Housekeepers only half recognize this great change, and it is to their ignorance of this fact, or their false reasoning upon it, that we owe that scourge —Dyspepsia—that is riding rampant all over the land. We are hungry when we seat ourselves at the family table where the material is abundant and good, but nothing is appetizing. Our hunger suddenly vanishes, but we eat something under a sort of inward protest,

and an hour after our hunger returns, and we eat irregularly, and take refuge in candies and sweet things, and highly-flavored sauces.

The materials that we have are the same that our ancestors used—beef, and mutton, and fish, and vegetables, etc. ; we need the same variety of strengthening meat, vegetables, fruit, fatty matter, and saccharine matter, and the cereals ; but they must be differently cooked, dressed, and served to be palatable and healthful for us.

Nor will it do for Americans to regulate their meals and diet by the French, Italian, or English customs. Climates that differ so essentially must necessarily produce very different physiques. The two meals and a half per day of the French will not agree with us any better than the four meals of the English. Experience has shown that the custom of having three meals a day, which prevails all over this country, is a wise one. The fault is not that we have not learned to regulate our meals as to time, quantity and quality, but that we have not learned to cook our food in the best way.

It has been the custom among us to eat substantial breakfasts, but, of late, it has become the fashion to say that we should breakfast on tea and toast, or have a cup of coffee, with bread and butter, and fruits. Some substitute wine for coffee. This has a delicate and attractive sound, but such breakfasts do not suit our climate at all, nor do they agree with our habits as a nation of workers. A diet like this may do during the hot season in the Gulf States, but, even there, the addition of one somewhat substantial dish will be found more healthful, if there is any work to be done during the day. Wines are not the proper drinks for our

breakfasts. Coffee and tea suit us much better. In most of these matters the prevailing custom points out the right way.

But Cooking is an art (or science) not sufficiently valued in America. Each young housekeeper cooks as she was taught by her mother, or some elder friend, or, perhaps, quite as often she picks up her information from the first cooks she employs after her marriage; and all her life long she runs in the same groove. She has a cook-book, perhaps, and consults it in the making of a few cakes and jellies, and having culled out some half dozen recipes, which she uses over and over again for a series of years, cook-books are of no further service to her. How common it is in a family of grown-up sons and daughters to hear the remark: "The things at home are all good, but I must take a meal somewhere else occasionally to get up an appetite. I seem to need a change." Of course. Nobody can go on for twenty years eating the same things on certain days of the week, at certain seasons, prepared always in the same way, without needing a change. Some favorite dish each one has, and in all the years to come memory will revert to "Mother's apple-dumplings," or, "Mother's plum-puddings," as the most delicious dish ever invented. But, on the whole, they are weary enough of the monotonous round. It is not good in any business to get into grooves and ruts, and glide along the same road forever, and this is certainly true of cooking. This progresses and changes with the times like any other art or science, and to succeed in it housekeepers must make it a study, and not a dull routine. Many regard it as a finished art, but there is always something new to be learned in it, and house-

keepers, like lawyers, physicians, authors, merchants, etc., must modify their practice, or change it altogether as civilization progresses.

In this pursuit, as in every other at the present day, books, magazines, and newspapers note the changes. The number of household books and journals now published in this country show plainly that our housekeepers do manifest a desire to make a study of their art, and to learn what others are doing in the same field. There is scarcely a weekly newspaper that has not a household department, and even the daily papers gladly make room among politics and news for a good household article. It will be well for every housekeeper to have some journal on which she can rely, or occasionally to buy a good book on the subject, even as the lawyer and physician consult the Law and Medical Journals, not to yield them a blind obedience, but to learn what is being done by others in their profession in other parts of the country and the world; to glean out a useful hint here and there, and to "keep up with the times." Of course they are not all good—there is a great deal of trash written on this subject as well as every other—but some are good—good enough at least to be very useful to you.

And do not be ashamed because you are laughed at for "keeping house by book." Housekeeping is not a thing that we do right by instinct, and, is it any more of a disgrace to be taught by a good book than by a good housekeeper? And the latter are so very rare. Experienced housekeepers there are in plenty, but experience does not always give wisdom. We know a woman who had kept house for thirty-five years, and had made bread twice a week during all that time, ex-

cept when prevented by an occasional illness, and at the end of the thirty-five years her bread was as heavy and "soggy" as in the first year she made it; and we know another whose husband had dealt in clams for seventeen years, having sometimes as many as twenty thousand on hand at once, and, in all that time, she had not learned to cook a clam so that it was even palatable; and anything more unwholesome than her "doughy" clam fritters, and tough, leathery fish cut up into chowder, or smothered under wet crackers, and called by courtesy a clam stew, it would be difficult to imagine. It is unnecessary to state that a cook-book had never made its way into either of these houses. They knew no better way than their own, and no doubt thought those who complained of their cooking very ill-natured, or ignorant. Experience is not to be contemned when added to knowledge, but singly it is of little value. It is not claimed that any household book or journal is infallible, and just here is where experience will help you. You will find that some things can be added or subtracted from the recipes with advantage, and that some of the rules for household management do not suit your family, and you will modify or change them accordingly. It may be that in ten years you will be able to write a much better household book yourself, but none the less are you indebted to your old friend for all foundation knowledge, and to periodical household matter for the hints that you have worked into such a goodly shape.

And, if you cannot keep the recipes "in your head," it is no matter for discouragement. Have them where you can easily refer to them. If you have ideas about other branches of housekeeping, ideas about training

your children, ideas for the home circle, and for society, your head is pretty full, without retaining the exact proportions of eggs, butter, sugar, cream, flour, and flavoring that enter into the composition of a particular pudding.

The present style of cooking with so many "made dishes," as housekeepers call them, is more troublesome than the perpetual "plain roast or boiled," but is not as expensive. And, to keep house well, one must expect to take trouble. And, if more troublesome, it is not such a weariness to prepare meals with a choice of the variety we have at present, as it was when there was little beside "plain roast or boiled." Those families who have what they call "plain, substantial dinners" of huge pieces of meat, (often swimming in grease,) plain boiled potatoes, and stewed tomatoes that have been stirred around a few times over the fire, instead of being cooked until they were thick, and then well seasoned, with dessert only once or twice a week, and soup as a rarity, are not by any means the most healthy, nor are these establishments conducted on the most economical principles, although it may seem so to those who have never tried any other way. The every-day dinners require care, taste, and skill—first to select dishes that are seasonable, and then to arrange them so as to have a variety during the week, and where this is impracticable, to prepare them in a variety of styles; and lastly, to arrange the table in an attractive manner. The three courses of, first, soup; then meat, or fish, and vegetables; and then dessert, will be found the most attractive and healthy for the family, and the most economical also. It is not necessary to have desserts that are troublesome to prepare, and it is certainly best

not to have rich ones often, but something in the way of fruits or "sweet things," is not only palatable but wholesome, after partaking of meat, if the dessert consist of nothing but baked apples and cream, and some very plain cake. During the fruit season there is no difficulty in finding materials for desserts, and in the winter we have the canned fruits to help us out. Soups are easily made, and of so great a variety as to material, that we need not hesitate what to select in any season.

A servant who can set a table properly is almost as rare as one who knows how to wash dishes, and it is not such a very common thing to find housekeepers who arrange their tables handsomely. Provided that the dishes are clean, they think it is not much matter how they are put on. But, let the things be as clean as they may, if they are set on askew, in a hap-hazard fashion, the table will present a slovenly appearance. And, as the manners of children are cultivated through the senses quite as much as by precept, this helter-skelter, disorderly setting of the table, leads those children seated around it to think that, provided they eat to satisfy their hunger, it is no matter how they do it, and careless and slovenly table manners are the result. Your handsome china, and cut glass will not show to any advantage on such a table.

But whether you have decorated china, or plain stone ware, if it is glossy with cleanliness, and the dishes placed symmetrically on the table with due regard to what should be appropriate neighbors; if you have a spotless table-cloth, and clean, whole napkins; pretty table mats; bright knives, and silver; shining glass, with, perhaps, a dish or two of a fancy pattern; and, if

practicable, a few fragrant flowers ; your table will certainly be attractive, and the charm will extend to the contents of the dishes, so that everything will seem to have a more delicate flavor.

All this requires more artistic management than can be reasonably expected from a servant. Instruct her in regard to the general arrangement, but, before each meal, go into the dining-room, and give the fancy touches yourself. It will not require more than five minutes. And see that everything is there, that there shall be no running to the closet for the salt-cellars, extra spoons, etc.

One other thing in relation to the meals is of such importance that it certainly must not be left out of these hints. There should be pleasant conversation—not a monologue from one of the two heads of the house, nor yet a dialogue between them, but lively talk that passes from lip to lip. Some families take their meals in almost total silence—not because they are morose, or that they have not enough to say at other times—but simply because such has become their habit. Fast eating and dyspepsia are very apt to be also habits of such a family. But even if these evils do not result, such meals are too business-like and unsocial. And here, as in all the social life of the family, the mistress must be the leader. She may think this is too much to lay upon her, as, of course, it is her place to see that no one is neglected in serving, and she has also to preside over the tea and coffee urns. But she need not bear the burden of the conversation, only be on the look-out to see that it is kept up. If it flags, a word or two from her will set it going again. Some ladies rather discourage conversation at their tables, because it prolongs

the meals, thus taking time away from the beloved housework. But the additional pleasantness and healthfulness should be held in greater importance than getting the work all done in a given time. For a family to dispatch a breakfast in ten minutes, and a dinner in twenty, would, no doubt, be a very fine thing if they are Bedouin Arabs, but we fail to see what advantage it can possibly be if they are living in a settled and enlightened community, while the disadvantages are many and obvious.

It used to be the fashion, and is still the custom in some places, for the lady of the house to remain in the dining-room for a while after the meals were concluded, to see that the table was properly cleared, and the dishes properly washed. It might be well to revive the old custom. Or, if this takes time that cannot well be spared from other duties, let the mistress, when her servant first comes to her, take it for granted that she knows nothing of this apparently simple service, and instruct her in every detail, and afterwards take time occasionally to see if her instructions are followed. This course will prevent much waste, dirt, and bad management. For the way for persons of moderate means to live generously and well, is not to waste anything. Collect butter and fat from the plates for making the future soap ; if nice pieces of meat are left upon the plates, put them aside for the beggars who come to your door ; and do not allow the bread left upon the bread plates to be thrown away, but reserve it for puddings, or to crumb up for various dishes where bread crumbs are used. We do not advise gathering up the pieces of bread by the sides of the plates of the guests, to be used for these purposes, although this is recom.

mended by a popular English cook-book. This might, we think, be called repulsive economy. If small salt-cellars are used for each person, see that the salt remaining in them is thrown out, for servants often neglect this to save themselves the trouble of washing them. The plates should be well scraped before putting into the dish-pan, and the dregs thrown out of the cups and glasses. China should be washed in hot soap-suds, and rinsed in clear, hot water. Glass may be washed and rinsed in either cold or hot water, but must be wiped immediately. Dry with one towel and polish with another. Have a little brush convenient in case it should be needed for the crevicies of the raised ornamentation on the china, and for jugs in which the hand cannot be inserted, when, of course, the dish-cloth is not available. The knives should be cleaned after every meal, and the silver once a week.

One thing more should be mentioned in regard to preparing the meals. You cannot make good things of bad ingredients. This is a royal rule that you will do well to bear in mind. Buy the best flour, butter, lard, bread, etc. It is the most economical plan, also, for not only do you use good things more carefully, but it often happens that the articles made of poor ingredients are so bad that they are not eaten, and you are compelled to throw them away.

GIVING ENTERTAINMENTS.

This phrase is generally supposed to mean giving dinners, supper parties, and the like, but we do not purpose placing upon it any limitation of this kind, but shall treat it in connection with the society which the

heads of our house shall gather around them for the pleasure and benefit of the home circle.

We wish that we could be sure that they would enter into society. For, leaving out the very fashionable classes among us, whose numbers are small, and who live in a round of gaiety, there is very little of what might be called society in most neighborhoods, either of city or country. Even wealthy families, with abundance of leisure, (and this is especially true of country places,) seem to think that nothing is required of them except to live for themselves and families, and, possibly, a few friends; and those families whose means are limited, find plenty of excuses for keeping aloof from society, in the claims that their daily duties make upon their time, and in the scantiness of their wardrobes. Among the young, unmarried people there is, perhaps, in the course of the year, a good deal of random, reckless visiting, party-going, and attending places of amusement. But that is not society, properly speaking, as may be known from the fact that the acquaintances of one year are often an entirely different set from the last; and, from the more telling fact that it is a very common thing in cities for a family of brothers and sisters each one to have a circle of his or her own friends with whom the others have only a casual acquaintance. Parents and sisters often know absolutely nothing about the friends of the son and brother. This cannot happen in the country where everybody knows everybody, but there also there is no society that unites parents, brothers and sisters in one common bond.

And, even this loose kind of society, Americans are apt to give up when they have passed their first youth —chiefly, no doubt, because it was so loosely put to-

gether, and formed of such incongruous elements that it had no hold upon their lives. How common it is in the country to hear such remarks as the following: "This a dull neighborhood!" "Nobody visits here." "We have no time for visiting—no way of getting about." And in cities we hear: "We are not a family who visit much." "You must not expect me to come and see you, for I have got into the habit of staying at home," etc.

When society comprises only young, unmarried people it cannot last, and, in fact, never becomes what it should be—the controlling social power of a neighborhood. To have stability and influence it must comprise all ages above childhood. Then, when the young folks marry, instead of leaving it and sinking into obscurity, and thus gradually dissolving the society, they still remain in it, playing a different role. It is only in America that society is so exclusively given up to the boys and girls.

In the cities, and in country towns, there is no excuse for this state of things. In the latter, friends live near each other, and in the former the facilities for cheap travel are so great that distance is a matter of minor importance. Some excuse there is for families who live in real country neighborhoods, where friends are separated by several miles of rough road, and whose only reliance in going about is placed on one or two overworked farm-horses. But, if these families were all moved by a strong desire for social intercourse, it is probable that the rough roads would be made smoother, and, in making provision for yearly expenses, money would be set aside for keeping an extra horse. Money can be had for other things that the family

greatly desire—an expensive piece of furniture perhaps—and why not for this purpose? And, besides, there must sometimes be a way contrived for the young folks to pay a visit. Why not extend the contrivance throughout the year, and give *all* opportunities for enjoying society? In this, as in very many other things, "where there's a will there's a way."

But, you say you cannot afford to waste time that way? Are you sure that it is a waste of time? You need not join a society of spies who pick out each other's faults and gossip about them, nor yet a society of frivolous people who strive to out-do each other in extravagant dressing and costly entertainments. This would be worse than a waste of time. Two or three intelligent young women of tact and address can, even in one of the "dull" neighborhoods, form a society out of the materials they find there, the young and the old, the witty and the stupid, the elegant and the plain, the gay and the grave, the industrious and the idle, even taking in the gossips that will in a few years be pronounced "delightful" by every visitor to the place. The "tone" that they give it will be its own as long as it exists.

Out of three hundred working days in the year can you not spare some time for recreation? And do you not need it? For your own sakes you should cultivate society, and have a moderate amount of pleasure-making throughout the year. It will keep you young, fresh, and bright to throw aside cares and work sometimes, and surely these are great gains. And good society is very improving—your mind will be more active than if you drew all its food from books. It is not necessary for this purpose that there should be

formal meetings and solemn discourse. The lively talk of a huckleberry party, bent upon nothing but pleasure, if composed of people of fair intelligence, and moderate culture, will brighten you up for a month, and give you new ideas to think over. And, moreover, you learn to extend your sympathies beyond your own fireside. With no less love for the home article your heart expands, and you enter into the joys and sorrows of your friends, and become more generous, tender, and helpful.

When your own children, or those in whom you take an interest, grow up, and enter into this society, you will feel assured that you have not wasted your time, whatever doubts may, until then, have lingered in your minds. How much better will it be to introduce them into a society that you helped to form yourself, and which you know to be good, than to have them going about with associates of whom you know little or nothing, because you have chosen to lead a secluded life. And then, too, you will be with them, and you and the young people enjoy society together, with the same interests, the same friends, and, in some degree, the same amusements. Men and women of fifty do not generally care for dancing, skating, and a few of the very active amusements of the young ; but there are a great many in which they would take pleasure as long as they were able to go about at all, if public opinion would only sanction them. And can you not help to form public opinion?

The expense of dressing sufficiently well for society is another excuse given for the selfish seclusion in which so many families live. This excuse has been advanced by *every family* in particular neighborhoods.

Now, it would seem that where all are equally badly off, according to their own showing, they might visit each other freely without fear of "odious comparisons." Nobody need be ashamed of a calico dress in a party where all dress in calico. At such a gathering the wearer of a silk dress would feel abashed. A man can enjoy himself quite as much in a homespun suit as in broadcloth, provided all his companions wear homespun. And there are very few families in this land who have not better things in their wardrobes than calicoes and homespun. It is the fashion now everywhere to exaggerate the importance of dress. And yet we saw, not long ago, at a party, a bevy of girls dressed precisely alike in clear white Swiss muslin dresses, made tastefully and simply (costing, when finished, ten dollars apiece) with no ornament save a cluster of green leaves where the dress was fastened at the throat, and with their own hair arranged in graceful styles, with not even a flower to help dress it. How pretty they all looked, and how they did enjoy themselves! It is true that such a very simple toilette as this needs the beauty and freshness of youth to lend it grace, and older ladies must give a little more thought and labor to their adorning, but there is no need that it should be costly, nor must their dresses be loaded with a vast amount of trimming, nor need they be ashamed of wearing the same dress many times, if it is tasteful and becoming. Introduce into a pleasant circle of friends a spirit of display in dress, or style of entertaining, and it will dissolve like the dew.

[The conditions on which the small "Sociables" have, of late years, been formed in cities and towns—*i. e.* placing limitations on dress and entertainments—

might, we should think, be extended to include a large circle of acquaintances who wished to enjoy society on limited means.]

We will suppose that you, young housekeepers, have builded or rented your house, furnished it, and duly ordered all things in it to the best of your ability ; and now, fully impressed with the ideas just expressed, are looking about to see what materials you have to help you in forming a pleasant society. If you are living near your old home, even if your parents had no society, and you have picked up your associates in the haphazard way so common among our young people, there are probably among them some two or three congenial spirits that you will like to entertain as friends, and with these for a nucleus, your society will soon be formed, for other congenial spirits will naturally gravitate towards it. For, in all these things, it is only the beginning that is troublesome. In a neighborhood that is new to you, you will have a struggle, and it will take a much longer time ; for you not only have to find out what are your neighbors' capabilities and tastes, but to work your way into their favor. The best plan will be to try to impress with your views some lady who is a power in the little community, and if you succeed in setting her to work, you may consider your purpose accomplished.

The next thing will be for the leaders in the enterprise (there are sure to be a few who will be looked up to as leaders, without any desire on their part for the distinction) to devise amusements and occupations. For a round of visits to each other's houses, with nothing but desultory chat and needlework for the women, and talk of politics and crops for the men, will soon be-

come a weariness. The most delightful social meetings are those which have some object.

In other countries it seems easy to supply these objects, or rather, the people take naturally to certain amusements. In most of them dancing is a diversion that never palls, and old and young take part in it ; the men have games of strength and skill which everybody goes to see ; there are gardens in which they delight to assemble, and hold a sort of perpetual pic-nic ; there are musical gatherings at market places, village greens, and private houses ; there are flower shows, etc.

But Americans do not patronize public gardens, or public out-door gatherings of any kind ; dancing is certainly not a national pastime ; and, although nearly all American girls are taught the piano, we are not a musical people. Our amusements must be confined to private circles, and, in general, those are best liked that require some little intelligence and skill.

If you have a hobby on which you expect your society to ride, you will be defeated at once. You cannot expect to get together all the ladies and gentlemen of a neighborhood, old and young, wise and simple, and form them into a literary club, or an art circle, or a musical society, or a scientific association, or a merry-go-round of dancing and fun. Here and there, possibly, will be found an individual of high culture, or one who has a decided taste for something ; but respectability, ordinary education, and good manners are all that you can expect from the majority. If the society is properly organized, a higher grade of culture will follow in time. But you will find on further acquaintance that each one of these mediocre people has a gift for doing some one thing very well. These gifts society will utilize.

You have quite a variety of amusements and occupations from which to make a selection that will be best adapted to the tastes of your acquaintances. For country society in the summer there are lawn parties, croquet parties, berrying, botanizing, pic-nics, etc. In the cities the society will probably be broken up in the summer, on account of numerous absentees, but those who remain in town can organize private excursions that will be enjoyable and healthful. In the winter, for both city and country, there are tableaux, charades, ordinary parties, reading clubs, housekeepers' clubs ; and many others will suggests themselves. If you live in the country, try, if possible, to have a library. A small yearly subscription from a number of persons will, in a few years, lay the foundation of a good library.

It may turn out at last that society will become too attractive to you, and instead of making an effort to go out you will have to make an effort to stay at home. This will be a most deplorable state of things, and, as soon as you detect the first symptoms indicating that society is laying too strong a hold on you, withdraw yourself from some of your diversions, and resolutely confine yourself to such only as will not encroach upon the time that should be given to your family. The home circle must be best and sweetest to you, and when we entreat you to cultivate society, we mean, of course, that it should be enjoyed in moderation.

It will be seen from the above remarks that there are many ways of entertaining your friends besides feasting them. It is troublesome and costly to give dinner parties, and balls, and they do not yield as much enjoyment as the more informal gatherings.

For lawn parties and summer evening entertainments, let the refreshments be simple. Sliced tongue, light biscuits or crackers, cakes, fruit, lemonade, or ice cream, jellies, custards, etc. Cooling drinks will be generally preferred, but you will find that rich, hot coffee, served some little time after the other refreshments, will meet with a cordial welcome. These light things will be all that your guests will expect if they are informally served—*i.e.*, "handed around" or placed where they can help themselves. But, if you wish to set a table you should add some dishes a little more substantial, such as pickled meats, potted game, cold chicken, chicken or lobster salad, etc. If you would like to have some hot dishes, and still avoid heavy meats, make fricandels, rissoles, or croquettes. These are dainty dishes, if well made, are inexpensive, and are always popular. After such an entertainment serve coffee, tea, and chocolate.

For an informal winter evening party there is a still greater variety to choose from—light biscuit, rolls, cold turkey, canned fruits, apples, oranges, grapes, nuts, creams, coffee, etc. And, if you set a table, you can add to these oysters, raw and cooked, in some one of the numerous styles, game, cold, or hot, etc., etc.

Even when you give an entertainment in which eating is supposed to play the most important part, it is not necessary to invite your friends to an elaborate dinner of a dozen courses.

Some families have a way of inviting a few friends at a time to what they call "little suppers." And these charming affairs are remembered long after the stately dinner is forgotten. On such occasions the selection of the company is of the first importance. It will not

do here to mix together the wise and the ignorant, the grave and the gay. The success of a "little supper" depends chiefly upon the guests being exactly suited to each other. But here, of course, where people are especially invited to supper, that supper assumes greater importance than when they are invited to a musical party, tableau, etc., and will require study on the part of the housekeeper, skill in cooking, and taste in arranging. And here, again, the dishes need not be costly. It is not rare dishes, or a great variety, that the "little supper" demands, but each one must be *absolutely perfect*, (what on ordinary occasions is a slight mistake here becomes a glaring fault;) the table must be handsomely set; the guests properly placed, and the conversation never be allowed to flag. Heavy meats are not in good taste for a "little supper," or a variety of cakes and sweetmeats. The tea and coffee should be strong, the chocolate rich, the meats daintily prepared, mostly of French dishes, or American "made dishes," the gems, muffins, etc., should be delicate and crisp, the French rolls light, the glass and china should be sparkling, the table linen of fine white damask, and some pretty designs in flowers and fruit should grace the table.

When you give a dinner party, it is best not to vary it much from your usual style of every-day serving. A greater quantity you must have, of course, and perhaps a greater variety, and you may desire to put on a few extra fancy touches, but do not attempt anything magnificent in the way of style unless you are accustomed to live in a stylish manner. If your usual dinner consists of but three courses, it will be well on this occasion to add a fourth, and follow the soup with

fish, and the dessert of pies, pudding, creams, etc., should be followed by fruits, nuts, and raisins. And, beyond this, it is not necessary to turn out of your usual course. Your own servants and the extra ones you hire, know what to do with such a dinner as this, you see that everything is going on properly, and your mind is at ease so that you can take the leading part in entertaining your guests. And if everything is prepared in the best way, and nicely served, your guests will be much better pleased than if you had attempted a grand entertainment. For knowing what your every-day style of living was, they would only laugh at this spasmodic attempt at grandeur. If you are ambitious to give a grand dinner, where the plates are to be changed for a dozen courses, (half of them senseless courses, where the dishes would be much more attractive if put on the table together,) and the table rearranged for each one dextrously and quietly, where there is a scanty supply of ignorant servants, and the stable boy or grocer's boy, as the case may be, plays the part of head-waiter, and where you have attempted to make the same beautiful designs as the confectioner furnishes for such dinners, without any of his tools, to say nothing of his long apprenticeship at the business, you may depend upon it that you are not playing so grand a part as you imagine.

There is a story told of a party of Indians, who were taken away from this country several years ago, and exhibited in various European cities. At last they arrived in Paris, and at their first exhibition they were surprised at the small degree of enthusiasm the audience showed, although very attentive to all that was done. Finally, near the close of the performance, a

boy, unable to restrain himself any longer, cried out—"Look here! Some of you fellows have sewed up your elbows with white thread! Better dye it next time!" The performers stood aghast, and looked at each other. Too true! The elbows of their false red skins having given way some time before, they had carelessly stitched them with white cotton, and their after exertions had stretched open the seams until there was a grinning row of ghastly white stitches. And it appeared that the audience had seen them from the first. This is a most astonishing instance of politeness in an audience, but then it was French! American boys would have proclaimed the white thread the moment that the pretended Indians appeared. But this only helps to point the moral of the story. The habits of good society make your guests apparently blind, but you may be sure that *they see the white stitches.*

Nothing on the table is exactly what it should be; even the dishes that your cook ordinarily prepares admirably are poor, because she has been made nervous by such extra demands upon her time and intelligence; the servants are awkward; your family ill at ease, which throws a restraint over the guests; and you are in a most lamentable state of mind, every moment on the look-out for some catastrophe.

If you are determined to give dinners so out of proportion to the ordinary style of your household, make up your mind to do it properly, and to *pay for it.* Hire a fashionable caterer and give him *carte blanche.* He will supply cooks, waiters, and the best of everything. You can preside at your table with a mind at ease, and a serene countenance, and your dinner will be a great success—if you think it worth the price.

PART VI.

HOUSEHOLD MISCELLANIES.

THE SEWING MACHINE.

This ought just as surely to have a place on your list of articles for housekeeping as the gridiron and wash-boiler. It should be ranked as one of the necessary expenses. The advertisements setting forth the various advantages of different manufactures are so widely scattered through the country that the opportunity is given to all to read, and judge for themselves of their comparative merits. We pronounce no opinion in the case except this, that, while some are excellent, they are all good, and that the very poorest, whichever that may be, is far better than none. They can be obtained now at almost any price, between ten dollars and a hundred. Whatever is beyond this is for costly wood, and fancy styles.

It is a sinful waste of time to spend three days in making a garment that can be made in one by the help of the machine ; and, now that machines are so cheap, there is no excuse for spending so many precious hours on groups of tucks, and yards of hemming, felling, stitching, cording, etc., etc. With a little care and

good management any family can save ten dollars for such a purpose. Those who have been accustomed to having all their time filled up with an everlasting stitch, stitch, will be very much surprised at first to find that they actually get through their work sometimes, and absolutely have no sewing to do! Perhaps they will not be altogether easy under this new state of things, and imagine that they are growing lazy, but they will soon find that this world contains work to be done that is at least as important as sewing, and some of it more improving, and very much of it more healthful.

A MEDICINE CHEST.

This is also necessary. As the warm weather approaches, you should see that it is provided with the proper medicines for summer complaints, and in winter with those best for colds, and their incidental ailments.

Precisely what these shall be it is not the province of this book to say. Each family has its own favorite school of medicine. But do not select the contents of your chest from advertisements of quack nostrums that have worked marvellous cures. Consult your physician as to the medicines that will be useful on emergencies, for, of course, it is only for these and for slight complaints, easily understood, that your chest is to provide. Many a life has been preserved by having at hand, and using promptly, the proper means and medicines for giving relief until the doctor comes, and many a limb has been saved by having lint, bandages, etc., just where one could at once lay hands upon them. A physician cannot always be procured at a few minutes' notice, and, in country places, it is sometimes hours be-

fore he arrives. Therefore have the medicine chest always well provided, and do not keep the contents of any vial after you have reason to think there is a possibility of its being stale or worthless. Throw it out at once, and replenish, and when you do this, instead of grumbling at the waste of the money you paid for it, be devoutly thankful that you have the opportunity of thus disposing of it. Besides the physic, every medicine chest should contain some of the mustard plasters that are now sold ready prepared ; some good salve ; syringes ; soft flannels for rubbing ; a roll of old linen for bandages, and lint.

A CEDAR BOX.

A desirable article to add to the regular furnishing is a cedar box, in which to lay all the woolen household goods and the woolen garments during the summer. You can then feel secure that your blankets, furs, etc., will not be visited by moths. Country housekeepers can have these made at quite a low cost. A wardrobe lined with cedar, and with a division containing deep drawers of that wood, is of equal efficacy and much greater convenience, but will be rather a costly affair.

STORE ROOM.

Every house should have a store room, built for that purpose, convenient to the kitchen and dining-room. It should be about nine feet square, with a high ceiling, and thick walls. A northern exposure is best when practicable. But, as half the houses are built without the least reference to the storing of provisions, a room must generally be improvised for the purpose. It

may be that you will find some closet or tiny room that answers all the requirements, but the probability is that there will be nothing of the kind ; and then you will very likely be obliged to have two—a cool and a dry one. Make a closet in one corner of the cellar, by having two sides of a partition built, and a door cut in one side, and the necessary number of shelves put up. Here you can keep those articles that require to be in a cool place, and that dampness will not injure ; and some up-stairs closet, that is not too close and hot, must be set apart for those articles that require a very dry place. It is a good plan to have a store-room book, containing a full list of all your possessions, that you may know what has been used, and what is still on hand, and on what particular shelf of what particular closet is the precise jug, jar, or box which you want at that precise moment. The inventory will have to be taken every year, in the early part of the fall, after the store of canned fruits, preserves, pickles, etc., is laid in.

A ROOM FOR THE SICK.

When treating of bedrooms, some suggestions were thrown out in regard to furnishing a room for a chronic invalid for whom, for a great part of the year, perhaps one apartment serves for parlor, dining-room, and bedroom. But a room for the sick is a different affair, although many rules that will apply to the one will also serve for the other. The room referred to under our heading, is for a temporary illness, which threatens to be somewhat violent in character. It is not meant that any one room of the house should be set apart and furnished with a special view to using it for a hospital.

But when a member of a family is taken ill, the question is often asked anxiously: "What is the best room for him?" and also: "What can we do to make him most comfortable?"

In providing for this exigency two things are to be considered—the comfort of the patient; and the convenience of nursing him. A first floor room is the most desirable for convenience, and is generally cooler for summer use, but it is not as likely to be dry and airy as an upper apartment. [For a room may be cool and not airy.] And it has the great disadvantage that it is impossible to entirely shut out noises. It is usually best, then, to select a bedroom on the second floor, the lightest and airiest, either for winter or summer use. If there is one with an open fire-place, by all means give that the preference. If there is no fire-place have a small stove put up, for even in summer there are "wet spells" in which dampness will penetrate every nook and crevice, and the only way to counteract its bad effects is to make a wood fire for a little while. Half an hour a day is often sufficient. Wood is best to burn in winter also, as gases will sometimes arise from coal, notwithstanding all our care. A wood fire can also be attended to with less noise. We have lately seen an excellent suggestion in regard to replenishing a coal fire in a sick-room. It is to keep on hand a number of small paper bags filled with lumps of coal, and lay them on the fire as wanted. These bags can be filled down stairs, and a scuttleful of them brought up instead of the loose coal.

Gas is the most desirable light for a sick-room, and where there is no gas, use good, clear lard oil, or candles of paraffine, or sperm. It is best to have one of

these ready to be lighted even where gas or a lamp is used, as the former may suddenly fail, and the latter become clogged or smoky. Never use kerosene oil in a sick-room. Next to the gas a taper is best when a dim light is required. Get those made with a wax base about two inches in diameter, and an inch in height, from which rises a little pyramid of wax with a wick in the centre. One of these will burn ten hours. No improvised tapers can compare with these, and it would be a good idea to keep some of them in the medicine chest that they may be ready when wanted. But, if these are not at hand, cut a newspaper into small square pieces, and twist them around the finger into a sugar-loaf shape. Immerse the base in a saucer half filled with melted lard, leaving the apex about an inch above the surface. It is said that sycamore balls make very good tapers when saturated with melted lard.

It is best not to have a carpet on the floor of a sick-room, but this is a rule that admits of many exceptions.

Not so, however, in regard to woolen hangings, which are inadmissible in a sick-room ; and woolen upholstery of all kinds is to be avoided. If the curtains are of lace or thin muslin they may remain, but if of any heavy material they should be removed.

The shades at the windows will generally be found sufficient for excluding the light in connection with the shutters (either outside or inside.) But if it is desirable to have the room quite dark at times, make a plain curtain of some dark cotton stuff—one that will slip noiselessly on a string, or that can be taken down in a moment.

Feather beds are held by most persons at this present day to be very unhealthful contrivances, although they

still have some quite able champions who argue to the contrary. Whatever they may be to the healthy, there can scarcely be two opinions in regard to their being very bad for the sick. Even their advocates say that they should be well beaten and thoroughly aired every day, and this in a sick-room is clearly impossible. And it is almost impossible to nurse a sick person on a feather bed. A hair mattress is not as absorbent as feathers, has no odor of its own, and is manageable with little effort. It should be laid on springs, and will probably require another mattress under it. Hair is best for this, but wool or even cotton will do if new, or nearly so.

Have the bedstead out from the wall, and as near the centre of the room as convenient, and in placing the bedstead due attention must be given to the draughts in the room. The most desirable spot is where there is the most air with the least draught, and it should be so placed that the light will not shine in the patient's eyes. Let there be no furniture in the room that is not absolutely necessary.

Keep the medicines on a little table behind the bed head, where they will be convenient, and yet out of sight of the patient.

The nurse must have a time-piece, but a loud ticking clock is often a great annoyance to a sick person.

These directions apply to the room of a very sick person, where only his immediate comfort and the things that tend to his restoration are considered. As he convalesces the articles of furniture can gradually be restored to their places, the dingy window-hanging replaced by something lighter and brighter, and all sorts of pretty things may be gathered into the room.

SECOND-HAND FURNITURE.

Young housekeepers hold second-hand furniture in too great contempt, while older housekeepers, who have learned the value of money, are apt to hold it in too great respect. A great deal of money is spent in the aggregate by "managing" housekeepers who buy up unsightly, old-fashioned, rickety furniture "for a trifle" for each article. Half of it is good for nothing but firewood, and what remains is botched up by some cabinet-maker and placed about the house to disfigure it by inherent ugliness. Others who are on the lookout for something better than this spend hours at auction rooms for days and days until at last they secure one or two things and consider they have done well if they have saved a few dollars thereby. Clearly to them time is not money. And it very often happens that these things, that are such wonderful bargains, turn out to be dearer than the brand-new ones at the furniture-dealers, or "there is a screw loose somewhere." On the other hand, where second-hand furniture has been well kept and looks fresh, and where the proper reduction is made in the price, and where you are sure it is good, it is often of great advantage to buy it instead of the new, because for the same price you can not only get a handsome article, but a better made one.

If you are purchasing from a friend, you may buy without fear what you choose; but there are certain articles that should never be bought at second-hand at an auction, or from a regular dealer—bedding, bedsteads, carpets, oil-cloths, and upholstered furniture.

In connection with this subject it may be mentioned

that many writers lay down as an excellent rule that one must *never* buy what are called

BARGAINS.

But this is requiring too much of human nature; and besides it is a very good thing to get a good bargain provided you have come by it honestly, and in good faith, and not by overreaching, or fraud, or taking an unfair advantage of the unfortunate. A better rule would be never to buy any article *merely because it is a bargain.*

HOW TO MAKE CARPETS.

The fashion of binding carpets is obsolete. It has been found that they wear much better by being simply turned in and tacked down. Lay two breadths on the floor, and match the figures accurately; then with a carpet needle and thread tack the breadths together in several places, generally at points and intersections of figures, by taking a stitch or two, and then tying the ends of the thread into a knot. This must be done securely, so there is no danger that the figures will slip out of place when you turn the carpet over to sew it. If, in tacking this way, you find that one edge is fuller than the other, so that it will necessarily "pucker" when sewed, do not be alarmed, for it will all come right. Your first business is to match the figures at all hazards. Having done this you can cut the two breadths apart. Then lay down the third breadth, match the figures, and tack in the same manner; and so on, until all the breadths are tacked and cut. In laying down the breadths you must allow a little at each end for turning in. Now turn your carpet on the

wrong side, and sew the breadths together, with an over-seam, or by putting the needle through one edge and bringing it back through the other.

The stitches should not be taken through the whole thickness, unly the under half. In this way the stitches can lie closely, and the edges be securely fastened together, without danger of drawing open when laid down, and yet the seam will not be heavy, nor the thread show on the right side.

When a carpet is tacked down, it should be stretched rather tightly, or it will rub up in folds and wrinkles, after being walked over for a few days. The figures will be your best guide in this, for they must, of course, run in straight lines, and not be drawn out of shape.

After the carpet is tacked down, you will find, in most cases, that the puckers in the seams have disappeared, but if they have not, they generally will in a few days ; if, however, they are very obstinate, wet them with clean cold water, and, when the carpet dries, you will find it is smooth.

HOW TO DO UP LACE OR MUSLIN CURTAINS.

Before the curtains are put in the wash, tack all around them narrow strips of white cotton cloth, an inch or two wide. Dissolve a little soda in milk-warm water, and put in the curtains. Let them remain for half an hour, stirring and pressing them occasionally. Wring them very carefully—rather squeezing than wringing, whenever this process is to be performed. Place them in cold water for an hour. Then wash them with soap and warm water (but not *hot*). Wash again in clean water, rather hotter than the last. Rinse them

in bluing water (only slightly blue, unless the curtains are very yellow). Wring carefully in clean towels. They are now ready for starching. Make the starch according to the usual process, but be sure to have it clear, and good, and *thin*, for muslin, and *very thin* for lace. Thick starch is utterly destructive to the fine, soft appearance of the lace. Stir a few times round in the starch, while boiling, a wax or sperm candle, or put into it a small piece of white wax. If the latter is used, it should be melted and poured in. When the starch is ready, pour half of it into one pan, and half into another. Dip the curtains in one ; wring them out in towels ; then dip into the second, and wring again. On the floor of an unoccupied room spread a couple of sheets, one under the other, for each curtain, or rather, half of a curtain. A large sheet folded may be wide enough. Shake the curtain, with assistance from some one, and lay it down smoothly, the edges of the cotton cloth to the edges of the sheet. Pin down the top and back. The other sides will then come perfectly straight without pinning. Leave them to dry ; and then remove the strips of cloth, and hang the curtains to the windows at once. They should not be folded. If you should desire to put them away for a while, roll them lightly in a loose, soft roll, and wrap in *blue* paper, or cotton, the former preferable ; but, in both instances, assure yourself that the blue dye does not rub off ; and lay them where no weight will press against them.

MATTING.

Matting should never be washed with anything but salt and water—a pint of salt to half a pailful of soft

water, moderately warm. Dry quickly with a soft cloth. Twice during the season will probably be sufficient washing for a bedroom, but a room much used will require it somewhat oftener.

OIL-CLOTH

Is ruined by the application of lye soap, as the lye eats the cloth, and, after being washed, it should be wiped perfectly dry, or the dampness will soon rot it. If laid down where the sun will shine on it much, it will be apt to stick fast to the floor, unless paper is laid under it.

OILED FURNITURE.

When oiled walnut begins to grow dingy, it can be made to look as fresh as new by re-oiling. Linseed, or even olive oil can be used, but pure, good kerosene oil is much the best. Rub it well in with a soft woolen rag, and polish with clean, dry flannel.

SILVER.

Silver should never be allowed to grow dingy, and need not, if properly washed after every meal. Wash in very hot soft water, with hard soap. Wipe hard and quickly, on a clean towel, and polish with dry flannel. If discolored with egg, mustard, etc., rub out the stain with a small, stiff brush, and silver soap, or whatever you use for cleaning silver ; then wash off in hot water, wipe, and polish. Use soft towels. This is for the articles in common use. Once a week have all the silver cleaned. If you wish to place silver away for

any length of time, wrap each article in blue paper, and it will keep a good color.

GILT FRAMES.

Boil three or four onions in a pint of water, then with a clean paint brush wash over your frames, and the flies will not alight on them. No injury will result to the frames. This renders unnecessary the unsightly drapings of gauze.

BEDS

Should be carefully examined very frequently, especially during the summer months, by the housekeeper, as servants neglect this duty altogether, or perform it carelessly. It is difficult to get rid of bed-bugs when they have once fairly established themselves in a house. Even new houses are sometimes infested by them, as there are certain kinds of wood in which they make their home, and thus their nests are built into the house. But they can be driven entirely off the field, if the war is only carried on briskly enough, and persisted in for a long time. When you think the last foe has yielded, and you have rested for a while on your laurels, you will be surprised some day to find one skirmishing on the sheet, or perhaps on your best shawl, and on investigation you will discover that he is only the advanced guard of a whole regiment lying in ambush in some secure retreat. Even if you do not see one for the remainder of that summer, you have no security that they will not appear the next spring in apparently undiminished force. But do not give way to despair; keep fighting, and you will be victorious at last. When one fails to make its appearance in a house for the whole

of a summer, you may congratulate yourself that the foe is completely routed. Here, again, there is no absolute security. You have certainly destroyed all the native inhabitants, but you do not know what day there may come a foreign importation. So you must keep a good lookout. Eternal vigilance is certainly the price of freedom from bed-bugs.

Hot steam is the best thing for driving these creatures from the walls of houses. A small steaming apparatus can be bought for an inconsiderable sum, or with a little ingenuity one can be fitted up at the cost of a dollar or so. Use it freely, and scald out every corner and crevice, from garret to cellar, quite frequently, until you feel sure that they are entirely dislodged; and after that, once or twice a year will be sufficient.

The persistent use of scalding water on bedsteads, pouring it on the slats, and springs, and joinings, (the bedstead must be often taken apart for this purpose,) will prove effectual in time, if no other means are used. But there are various substances employed to hasten the desired result. Corrosive sublimate—an ounce of it to a half pint of alcohol—is an old remedy, and effectual. So is quicksilver, beaten up with the whites of eggs. But both of these are deadly poisons, and housekeepers are afraid to use them. Persons very sensitive to poisons have been made sick by sleeping on bedsteads where corrosive sublimate had been recently applied. Some use hartshorn, but this injures paint and varnish. Some use nothing but salt and water, and others assert that kerosene oil is a sovereign remedy.

There are various powders sold that are effectual as bug destroyers, but housekeepers usually find them

very unreliable ; one package will be all that it claims to be, and another of the same kind of powder, bought at the same place, will be good for nothing. Sometimes this is because the powder has been adulterated, but generally because it has become stale. And these are, also, often very poisonous. One of the most popular of these, however, the Persian Insect Powder, is perfectly harmless to human beings, and is a deadly poison to all insects that infest houses. It is imported into this country from the East, and is prepared from a flower of the same genus as our Feverfew. But a great deal of this that is sold is good for nothing, also. If you can buy it in the original packages in which it was imported, you may feel pretty sure that it is good.

Mattress covers should be washed every month or two, but so arrange it that all will not be in the wash at the same time.

Sheets must be thoroughly aired before putting away, must be kept in a perfectly dry place, and should not be put upon the bed any length of time before they are to be used.

When a guest has left, and a bedroom is to be unoccupied for a time, fold up the bed-spread and blankets, and lay them carefully away ; and, having sent the sheets, bolster, and pillow cases to the wash, put on the pillows slips made of calico, and spread over mattress and bolster a covering made of the same. Thus everything will be kept clean until wanted again.

Mattresses should be exposed to the air every day, and have a good airing once a week ; and sometimes should be put out for a whole day in the sun and wind. In the case of invalids, where this cannot well be done, hair mattresses can be used without it longer than any

other. But here, if there are two beds, one can be spared sometimes for a good airing.

FEATHER BEDS.

These ought to be cleaned every spring. There are several ways of doing this, but the following is recommended, as it cleans both tick and feathers : Contrive, if possible, some sort of a platform, that you can set up in the yard, on which to lay your beds for cleaning or airing. Failing this, use a back porch. Wash the platform clean, and lay on it the feather bed, and let it remain there during the night in the dew. In the morning, before the dew is off, take a pail of clean, cold, soft water, and, with a new whisk broom, wet and rub the upper side of the bed for some time. Let it lie in the sun until it is dry, which will not be for several hours. Turn it over and treat the other side in the same way, and continue the process until the white stripes in the ticking look as clean as new. This treatment of the feathers makes them "lively."

If there is any indication of rain, the bed must be taken into the house. And, if you are afraid to leave the bed out at night, because of thieves, the dew must be dispensed with in the treatment.

FEATHER PILLOWS.

The best way to wash these is to put them out in a good hard rain for several hours ; and then wring them out, and dry quickly, that they may not get musty.

VASES.

It may not be generally known that bright-colored

vases, and those ornamented with flowers, do not show off real flowers to the best advantage. White or brown are best for this purpose.

FIRES.

Fires should be kindled at least once a week in every room through fall and winter, to prevent dampness.

DISINFECTANTS.

These should never be left more than a week unchanged, as they throw out the poisons they gather.

THE STOVE URN.

Keep the stove urn nearly filled with water, as long as the fire is kept up in the stove. Put a little charcoal also in the urn, and this ought to be changed every week.

WALL PAPERS.

Old paper should be removed from the walls before the new is put on. It can easily be done by wetting it with warm water. After it is all off, have the plaster wiped over with carbolic acid, to purify it. The disagreeable odor of the acid will disappear almost immediately, and you can then feel sure there is nothing infectious lurking in your walls. Use corn-starch paste for putting on the new paper, as it does not turn sour, or stain the paper.

COVERING FOR A STOVE.

Even the prettiest stove is not in itself a very beautiful object. In the cold weather when there is a fire

burning in it all the time and it gives a pleasant sensation of warmth to the occupants of the room, they forgive its ugliness, and regard it with very friendly feelings; but in summer it stands out in cold, cheerless deformity. And yet if there are no open fire-places, the stove should be left standing in, at least, one room all summer to be in readiness for the cold "north-easters" when the whole house seems pervaded with dampness, which a little fire will soon dissipate. In the fall, too, the stove ought to be put up in the sitting-room very early, and the fuel laid in it all ready for lighting whenever there is a chilly evening. To conceal the stove, when not in use, you can make a covering for it somewhat in the following style:

Have a light pine frame made, consisting of a square or oval top, on which are fitted three or four legs a little higher than the stove. Drape this frame with any pretty material that is sufficiently thick to conceal the stove. The under drapery must be tacked on quite full, and should fall to the floor; the upper must be still fuller to drape gracefully. Arrange the festoons in any style you fancy, only take care that some of them shall fall nearly to the bottom of the under drapery, or else your stand will look "lanky." Trim with woolen or cotton cord, according to material used, and hang tassels wherever they will be effective.

Before the drapery is put on, the top of the stand should be rubbed perfectly smooth, and then stained with black walnut stain.

This frame can be removed easily whenever a fire is needed. A vase of flowers or grasses can stand on the top.

A GRATE FOR WOOD FIRES.

Any country blacksmith can make a grate as described below, and it will be found of the greatest advantage where wood fires are used.

A broad strong iron bar is secured from side to side of the fire-place, and directly in front, about six inches above the hearth. From this bar others of less diameter, and about four or five inches apart, extend at right angles to the back of the fire-place, where they are fastened in the wall, or to a transverse bar, or secured properly upon bricks. No andirons are needed with a grate of this kind ; the wood burns well ; and the ashes fall down, and are easily removed.

If a second bar is fixed a few inches above the large front bar, the danger of the wood rolling forward, and out of the fire-place will be averted.

PART VII.

ORNAMENTAL WORK.

USEFUL articles of furniture can sometimes be made of apparently unpromising materials—sofas out of old chairs, arm-chairs out of barrels, lounges of packing-boxes, by those who have some mechanical ingenuity. But these things have not only been so often described that it is not now necessary to treat of them, but we do not consider that they enter into the plan of a well-furnished house. As a rule they are make-shifts, and nothing more, and though they will do very well in certain cases to fill up a vacancy in the house-furnishing, they are not to be relied upon as real, satisfactory furniture, such as we advise for a home.

But with ornamental work the case is very different. With natural good taste and some practice, very beautiful things can be made that will compare favorably with costly articles from the shops. And the work is in itself fascinating. Nearly every woman, young and old, has some particular hobby in the way of ornamental work from making patchwork quilts to embroidering altar cloths. Very many men, too, have a passion this way, but while the ladies instinctively take

to needle and thread, the gentlemen turn to knives and saws; and while the former are moulding wax, and pressing flowers, the latter apply themselves to planes and turning-lathes, and to the moulding of wood.

Where both male and female members of a family have these tastes a house is likely to be well filled with ornaments, and, if these are tastefully and artistically made, and put into their proper places, (a very important part of the process,) this is one of the surest means of converting a mere dwelling into a pleasant-looking home.

It would be impossible, except in a work especially for this purpose, to give directions for making the numerous articles of household adornment; and, where there is so much that is attractive, it is difficult to select those that are most desirable, for what one might fancy, another might not.

In these directions, therefore, we shall only give some general ideas, and a few samples, and these not with a view that they shall be exactly copied, but taken as they are meant—as suggestions—materials with which to work out far more beautiful results.

These simple hints, your own good taste, and the numerous patterns and designs that you see in your friends' houses, or find floating about in magazines and papers, will be sufficient to furnish you employment for many a leisure hour, and will help you to ornament your home at a small expense.

WOOD CARVING.

We begin with this, because it is the most beautiful of fancy household work, and because the most useful

ornamental articles are made of wood. For, because a thing is ornamental, it does not follow that it is not also useful ; and *vice versa.*

All boys (American boys, at least) manifest a decided taste for whittling, often greatly to the annoyance of their elders. As they grow into manhood they generally leave off whittling, with other childish things, (foreign writers to the contrary, notwithstanding.) The trait is only mentioned here to show that it is born in them as much as nursing dolls is in girls ; and to account for the fact that so many men have a natural gift for cutting and carving wood. It is the whittling grown into an art with the natural growth of the mind. Furnish such men with a pen-knife, and a few old cigar-boxes, and they will return you prettily carved brackets, picture-frames, etc. Very few women turn thus instinctively to such work, but if their attention is directed into this channel after some practice and with proper tools, (for with a pen-knife they would be powerless) the majority make very respectable wood carvers, and some become quite accomplished and skillful artists. And as women, as a rule, have more leisure than men, or perhaps we should say that the most of their leisure is passed within the home, it usually happens that the ornamental work falls largely into their hands.

The actual work of wood-carving is purely mechanical, and only requires care and nicety in cutting, and a very moderate supply of patience. It is in designing the patterns and in putting the pieces of carved wood together that your genius and taste are called into use. If you do not possess the former—for this particular thing—perhaps you have some friend who can draw designs for you ; and, if not, you can

buy them in infinite variety. Even in the matter of putting together you can obtain directions so explicit that you will have to take great pains to go wrong; but it is best to trust to your taste, and cultivate it by using it. For this is one useful purpose of all work that is known as "fancy."

First, in regard to the wood. This can be generally obtained from any cabinet-maker or carpenter. The former will probably have the greatest variety and the finest qualities. In country places you may not be able to obtain the foreign woods, but you can get Walnut, Oak, Chestnut, Butternut, Appletree, Cedar, Holly, and others. It will be well at first for you to consult with the man from whom you purchase in regard to the properties of the different woods, some being hard, and others soft, some soiling very easily with use, and others being difficult to polish, or varnish; but you will soon learn these things yourself. Wood varies in price, but none of the American woods are expensive. The most beautiful—and most costly—of the foreign woods are satinwood, rosewood, and ebony. But the latter being very effective, a little of it may be made to go a great way by using it for tiny centre-pieces, narrow mouldings, etc. Satinwood is also effective, but easily soiled, and is employed for dainty finishings of articles that are to be little used.

With some pieces of wood, pretty patterns, and inexpensive tools you can cut very respectable Easels, Brackets, Picture-Frames, Letter-Holders, Book-Racks, and numerous other small articles, and also ornaments for larger pieces of furniture.

Sand-paper for rubbing the wood smooth, and cement for mending breakages, will also be necessary.

The small saws are about twenty cents a dozen. They cannot be used without a frame in which to place them to steady them; and you will have to practice some time before you will be satisfied with your work. But it can be done well with a little patience. Those who wish to go extensively into this business, or a club of persons who desire to work together would do well to purchase a jig-saw at twenty-five dollars. This not only saws wood but soft metals; is mounted on a table like a sewing machine; and is worked somewhat in the same way. With this, wood-carving is very easy and fascinating work; and you may aspire to making really beautiful things.

But as this work will probably be found of too elaborate a nature, except for those who have a great deal of leisure, we will presently suggest some simpler ornamental work.

But, first we will give a few directions that will help in making a variety of things, both useful and ornamental.

BLACK WALNUT STAIN.

We give this first because it is useful for staining almost any article of furniture, and many ornaments; besides floors, woodwork, etc. It will impart to common wood, such as pine, the color and appearance of black walnut.

One quarter of a pound of asphaltum, one half pound of common beeswax to one gallon of turpentine. If found too thin add beeswax; if too light in color add asphaltum, though that must be done with caution, as a very little will make a great difference in the shade, as the wood should not be black, but a rich dark brown. Black is the color of the nut, and not the wood.

Varnishing is not essential, as the wax gives a good gloss.

TO POLISH WOOD.

This is rather a tedious process, and the best plan is to give it to a regular polisher. But if you wish to undertake it yourself, you will need some shellac (dark or light, according to your wood) dissolved in alcohol; some sweet oil, old linen, a little cotton wool, alcohol, and sand-paper.

First rub with sand-paper until the wood is perfectly smooth and soft.

Make a dabber of the cotton wool, cover it with the linen, and tie it firmly; wet it with the shellac and one drop of sweet oil, and rub the wood with a quick, even pressure, in circles, all over the surface. The only point is that the polish must be distributed evenly and quickly, and the same amount of rubbing given to every part. Continue the wetting and rubbing until the wood begins to reflect. The next day repeat the process, leaving intervals for absorption, till the reflection is as perfect as glass. When you are satisfied, take a fresh dabber, dampen it slightly with alcohol, and rub it softly and evenly over the wood; it will bring out the polish, and fix it. You must put on polish enough before using the alcohol, as you cannot put on any afterwards.

ASPHALTUM VARNISH.

One half a pound of asphaltum and one pint of turpentine are used for making this varnish. They can be obtained at a paint-shop or carriage maker's. Put the asphaltum into a tin basin, and pour on some of

the turpentine ; let it remain over night, and if well dissolved, try it with a brush on a piece of the same kind of wood or leather for which you are preparing it. When put on, it should be the color of black walnut. If it is too dark, add turpentine ; if too light, asphaltum. The proper proportions can only be known by thus experimenting. Apply one or two coats, as may be necessary.

TO MAKE LEATHER LEAVES.

Soak a piece of sheepskin in water until it is pliable. Cut a paper pattern of a leaf ; lay it on the leather, and cut. A carpenter's gouge is a good thing for the purpose.

When dry and stiff, varnish with asphaltum. These are used for picture frames, and for ornamenting the edges of book shelves, the tops of book cases, brackets, and a variety of things.

PLAIN LEATHER ORNAMENTS.

Get a piece of calfskin, and moisten it in warm water until soft and pliable. You can then cut it into scallops, diamonds, or any fashion you may admire. You can varnish with asphaltum, or leave it the natural color, which will deepen with age.

ACORNS.

These are often used for picture frames, baskets, etc., and also for mixing with leather leaves. The nuts and cups are glued together, and then glued to the wood. They are very pretty, but do not pay for the trouble of making, as they soon fall apart.

PINE CONES.

These are also much used for decorating, and are very handsome when varnished, but if glued on, are liable to fall off after some time. They can sometimes be tacked on. They should be mixed with other things, and, for most purposes, the small ones are the prettiest. The scales of the large cones are very pretty, each scale nailed on with small upholsterer's tacks, first boring the holes, so as not to split the wood.

FOR ORNAMENTATION.

Besides the above, there are many small things used for decorating, such as unroasted coffee beans, small black beans, kernels of rice ; and these, if well glued on, are not as apt to fall off as the heavier cones and acorns. These can be arranged in geometrical figures, rosettes, balls, and almost any way that fancy may suggest. Varnish with asphaltum, or black varnish, if you prefer it, which can be procured at any paint-shop. Cloves, allspice, and berries are strung on wires and twisted into scallops, double scallops, diamonds, etc., for edging and borderings.

RUSTIC WORK.

This is chiefly used for ornamenting large hanging baskets, aquariums, flower stands, and lawn tables, settees, and chairs ; and sometimes for smaller articles, such as boxes and picture frames. The materials are sticks of various woods, either flat or round, generally oiled and varnished, but sometimes with the bark left on. Twigs of various woods are freely employed ; these

have the bark on, and may be straight or bent, according to effect desired ; birch, hazel, and silver poplar are among the prettiest. Willow wands are easy to work with, and grape vines are not difficult to manage. These can be used with or without the bark. It is better to oil all wood from which the bark is stripped, but this is not absolutely necessary. Bits of rattan, strips of lath, pine cones, acorns, walnut shells sawed in pieces, walnut hulls, (split in two,) are all employed in rustic work ; and other materials will doubtless suggest themselves to those who have any knowledge of wood-craft. Asphaltum varnish will be found best on most rustic work, but for variety, black varnish, or even paint may be used when it is in wood colors, and not applied too thickly.

BRACKETS.

These may be constructed in simple forms of the plain wood, without any of the elaborate carving mentioned on a former page. They will not, of course, be as handsome, but are quite as useful. A little shelf, with semi-circular front, and sides cut to fit into a corner, may simply be fastened on the chair-rail. This is a corner shelf rather than a bracket, but is a convenient place for a vase of flowers or little bust. A small shelf, with straight back, and semi-circular front fitted to a standard, is the plainest style of the bracket proper. You will have to get a carpenter to cut the shelves and standards. You can then convert the plain affair into something fanciful by decorating shelf and standard with any of the leather or wood ornaments previously described.

LETTER RACKS.

These and letter pockets may be cut out of leather, or wood. If of the former, you can do it yourself, having first cut a paper pattern. Ornament the leather with small leaves, arranged in various forms, and the wood with rosettes of small articles, and pine cone scales, etc. They are sometimes made of embroidered cloth or satin, but these only suit bedrooms and libraries.

PICTURE FRAMES.

The prettiest home-made frames, after those made from the carved wood, are of leather leaves. Rustic work, if simple in construction, also looks well. Quite a graceful looking oval frame may be formed by twisting grape vines fantastically together, allowing the ends to project at the top and bottom.

A WARDIAN CASE.

This is a small glass closet over a well-drained box of soil. It can be constructed in various ways. The following is one of the simplest forms. Take a common, cheap table, about four feet long, and two wide. Remove the top boards, and board the bottom with them tightly. Line the box thus formed with zinc. Make the top of window glass. It should be about two and a half feet high, with a ridge-pole, on which rests the slanting roof of glass. In one end of this there must be a door of good size. The box must have a hole for drainage.

This is the case, which must now be filled with soil.

First turn a flower-pot saucer over the hole, which would otherwise be stopped up. Then spread over the bottom a layer of charcoal and broken pot-sherds an inch in depth. On this put the soil, which must be mixed in the following proportions : two fourths wood soil, one fourth clean sand, one fourth meadow soil taken from under fresh turf, and a small proportion of charcoal dust. This is large enough to give you a succession of flowers the whole winter, if you know what to put in it. If you do not, and have no one at hand to advise you, florists' catalogues will furnish the desired information. But the surest way to success is to write to some well-known florist, telling him what fuel you use, the temperature of the room, and the exposure of the window, and for a small sum of money he will send you the proper plants for this case, or for hanging baskets and flower-stands. It is absolutely necessary that the room in which are growing plants should be kept at an even temperature.

FLOWER STANDS.

Plain ones may be made with tables in the same way as described for the Wardian case, but without the glass cover. Fill the box about one third full of sand, and in this imbed the flower pots containing your plants, arranging them with reference to size, and also to color, if in blossom. Spread moss over the top of the stand in such a way as to conceal the pots. This will have to be renewed a few times during the winter. The sand should be kept damp, but not wet, and the moss also a little damp ; and the plants should be watered very little except in the case of those that require an

unusual supply of moisture, and these had better not be kept in the same stand with those that require only the ordinary supply.

The shelves, rising one above another, that have long been used for flower-stands, have been found objectionable, because the flower-pots are obtrusively ugly, but the flower-pot covers that are now sold remove this objection. These can be made of card-board, or thin pieces of wood. Still this is not a very desirable form of flower-stand, being cumbrous and possessing little beauty. The flower-pot covers will be found very nice when you wish to set a single plant on the window-sill or table.

For more fanciful forms of flower-stands, you should have the standards made by a neighboring cabinet-maker in plain wood and of any device. You can then ornament them with rustic work at your leisure. For the top you can have a round, square, or octagon box, also embellished with rustic work. Fill with soil, as in the Wardian case. Or you can have a flat circular piece of wood nailed to the standard, forming a round table. Make rustic work around the edge so that it shall be several inches high, and set on the table a basket made like a hanging basket, only larger, or some fancifully-made box, filled with soil for the reception of plants. All stands should be mounted on casters for convenience of moving.

Your own taste will suggest a variety of elegant devices for flower-stands, either for plants or cut flowers. If you can have the frames properly made according to your design, you can yourself ornament them in many beautiful styles. And there is nothing that so adorns a

room as a flower stand with its variety of greens and brilliant colors.

HANGING BASKETS.

If you take a cocoanut shell, and saw off a small section from the upper part, put in it a little piece of sponge, fill the shell with nothing but scouring sand, and a little charcoal, put in it the common plant, known generally as moneywort, and hang it where it can get the light and a little sunshine, you will soon have long swaying festoons and pendants of soft green, entwined with golden blossoms, through which will gleam the dark rich brown of your cocoanut shell, thus easily transformed into "a thing of beauty."

This is the simplest form of the hanging basket. For larger ones you can use wooden bowls, ornamented with rosettes and figures made of coffee, rice, and berries, as mentioned previously. With these can be mingled scales of pine cones, leather, leaves, etc. Or they can have edgings of rustic work, the rest of the bowl being ornamented with rosettes and balls made of the small materials. Three holes must be bored at regular distances near the edge for the cords that are to support the basket.

Very pretty baskets are made of sticks of oak, maple, or any of the handsomely-colored woods; they should be of equal lengths, eight or twelve inches long. Build up like a log house. At each corner a heated wire is thrust through the ends of the sticks to hold them together, and is bent into a loop at the top which supports the cord. A wooden bottom must be nailed on. Fill the interstices with moss.

And so we might go on through all the gradations, which are almost infinite up to the elaborate and in-

tricate designs in carved wood, shell-work, cork, etc. There is nothing easier to make than a hanging basket, or more difficult if you choose to take trouble. But the idea that many persons have that they must be bought is erroneous, for all the plainer styles that are sold by florists can be imitated with perfect success without very much trouble. A basket covered with rustic work carefully made, and pretty in design, with a handle of twisted grape vines, at an expenditure of fifty cents for materials, and a dollar for plants and vines, will be quite as handsome as one the florist would sell you for five dollars, and will have the advantage that the plants are much more likely to blossom. For it is a common complaint that when the baskets lose the flowers that are on them when bought they bloom no more—not that season, at least. The reason is that the dry air of the room in which they are hung is too great a change from the moist air of their native home, the greenhouse.

Very few things will grow like moneywort in common sand, but the soil in a hanging basket should not be very rich, or you will have a profusion of leaves, and but few blossoms. A light sandy loam is best. In the bottom place a piece of coarse sponge. This will hold the moisture, and the roots will absorb it as they require it. Also put bits of charcoal in the bottom, as this acts as a purifier to keep the earth sweet. Then fill with soil, one part rich earth, and two parts sand.

WAX WORK.

Wax flowers are the best imitations of the real ones, but where the latter can be obtained the former should

be dispensed with. With the introduction of hanging baskets and flower-stands, we have natural flowers in profusion in winter, when it is not always easy to obtain the cut flowers. So there would seem to be no necessity for the wax imitations. If you make these, use them sparingly, a spray of white lilies perhaps in one room, and a tea rose in another. Do not mass them together in great bunches.

Wax fruits, heaped up under glass covers, are not desirable ornaments. We marvel for a few moments at their wonderful resemblance to the original, but we soon tire of them. In a large room, however, they or the flowers massed together, do sometimes produce a fine effect from a distance, as a focus of brilliant colors.

A wax cross, with a trailing vine of passion flowers and green leaves, or rising in naked simplicity from a bed of violets or pansies, is a beautiful ornament for a mantel-piece or bracket.

LAMP SCREENS AND WINDOW PICTURES.

We mention these together because what is made for a window picture will do for a lamp screen. There are many kinds of lamp screens made, however, that cannot be used for window pictures, but into the merits of these we have not space to enter. The two styles we select are the prettiest.

Upon a square of white, or delicately tinted Bristol-board, trace lightly some pretty design, such as a bouquet, a cluster of leaves and fruit, or a cross, or an anchor, wreathed with leaves and flowers. The latter should be simple in form ; passion-flowers, lilies of the valley, apple blossoms, and sweet peas are the most ef-

fective. Fern leaves and fruit are also among the simpler designs.

For more effective pictures, select parts of a landscape, or figure pictures that are not too elaborate.

Having traced the design, lay the Bristol-board flat on a block of hard wood, and with a thin-bladed and very sharp knife proceed to cut smoothly through as much of each outline as possible, without entirely detaching any leaf or other distinct portion from the whole. One fifth of a leaf left without cutting through will be sufficient. Sometimes judicious prickings with a coarse needle add to the good effect. The points of the leaves and the petals of the flowers should next be pressed through toward the window to admit the light, and give the softly shaded effect we desire. The transparency can then be hung close to a window pane by means of narrow white ribbon loops at the corners, secured to the wood-work.

For lamp screens, several of these pieces of Bristol-board, each with a separate picture, can be put together.

The glass transparencies are more easily made, and require no skill in drawing.

Arrange pressed ferns, grasses, or autumn leaves, according to some pretty design, on a pane of window glass. Lay a pane of the same size over it, and bind the edges together with ribbon.

The best way to put on the binding, is to gum it all around the edge of the first pane you use, and let it dry before you arrange your design on it. Then you can fold it neatly over the second pane, and gum it on that. Use gum-tragacanth. It is well to put a narrow piece of paper under the ribbon.

To form the loop for hanging, paste a binding of galloon along the upper edge before the ribbon binding is put on, leaving a two-inch loop in the centre, to be pulled through a little slit in the final binding.

For a lamp screen, take four, six, or eight of these transparencies, and tack them together with strong sewing silk. To soften the light, the screen should be lined with oiled tissue paper, white or rose-color. Or you can give the glass the effect known as "ground glass," by rubbing the inner surface of each pane on a flat smooth stone, plentifully covered with white sand, before you insert the leaves.

PART VIII.

HOW TO FURNISH A HOUSE FOR A THOUSAND DOLLARS.

[The following Price Lists are carefully prepared, but it must be remembered that prices vary somewhat in different localities, and even in different stores in the same city, and that they also change from year to year. The latter is especially true of woven fabrics. But these changes are not radical enough to interfere with the list as a guide.

A house may be furnished for a less sum than that here given, from directions to be found in Part III.

Goods of inferior quality may sometimes be bought at lower prices than the same article is quoted in our Price List. Cornices, for instance, which we quote at three dollars and upward, are sold as low as a dollar and a half, but they are poorly made, and not such as we would recommend.

Our object has been to give the prices of *standard goods* that we know to be worth the money paid for them.]

PRICE LIST.

Kitchen, 15 × 15.

1 Table (5 feet long)	$5.00
" " (3 " ")	3.00
4 Chairs	3.00
Clock	3.00
Small Lantern	1.00
Step Ladder	2.50
Scales	1.50
Nail Hammer	0.50
Tack "	0.25
Market Basket	0.88
Clothes "	1.50
Tin Slop-pail, with cover	1.50
Coal Scuttle (galvanized)	1.38
Screw Driver	0.25
Tack Claw	0.25
Hatchet	0.88
Can Opener	0.50
Spoon and Fork Basket	1.50
Knife Box	0.38
Knife Board	0.50
Ice Pick	9.25
Quart Measure	0.20
Pint "	0.15
Coffee Mill	1.00
Spice "	0.75
Spice Box	1.25

Sugar Canister	1.00
Tea "	0.25
Coffee "	0.25
Rice "	0.75
Bread Box	2.00
Cake "	1.50
Funnel	0.18
Set of Wash-tubs	5.00
Clothes Horse	1.50
Skirt Board	1.25
Bosom "	0.25
Wash Board	0.38
Wash Bench	1.75
6 doz. Clothes Pins	0.24
Wash Boiler	5.00
Stand for Flat-irons	0.15
Clothes Lines	0.75
6 Flat Irons in three sizes	3.50
Ironing Blankets	2.00
2 Carpet Brooms	1.00
Stove Brush	0.50
Scrubbing Brush	0.31
Window "	0.88
Dust Pan	0.25
Tea Kettle (tin)	1.50
Iron Pot (large)	2.50
" " (small)	1.50
Enamelled Preserving Kettle	2.00
2 Tin Saucepans	1.00
Steamer and Saucepan	2.00
Fry Pan (large)	1.00
" " (small)	0.50
Dish Pan (large)	1.50
" " (small)	1.00
Set of 4 round Tin Pans	1.00
Roll Pan	0.75
Cake " (round)	0.25
2 Bread Pans	0.76
Drip Pan	1.00

Baking Tin (oval)	0.50
" " (square)	0.38
2 Earthen Pans	0.76
2 Lipped Bowls	0.50
Set of White Bowls	0.45
Pudding Dish	0.30
" " (smaller)	0.20
Waffle Iron	1.75
Muffin Pan, and doz. rings	1.00
Soap-stone Griddle	1.75
Chopping Board	0.62
" Bowl	0.62
Bread "	0.75
Pastry Board	0.75
Rolling Pin	0.25
2 Pastry Cutters	0.20
2 Cake "	0.20
Coffee Boiler	0.75
2 Bakers	1.00
Meat Knife	0.75
Bread "	1.00
Chopping "	0.50
Cork Screw	0.25
Meat Fork	0.25
Toast "	0.15
Steak Tongs	0.50
Paste Jagger	0.15
3 Iron Spoons	0.50
2 Wooden "	0.20
Wooden Ladle	0.20
Vegetable Skimmer	0.25
2 Water Pails	0.60
Tin Dipper	0.25
Hair Sieve	0.75
Wire " (large)	0.50
" " (small)	0.31
Potato Masher	0.15
Flour Dredger	0.30
Pepper "	0.15

Lemon Squeezer	0.25
Cake Turner	0.20
Egg Beater	0.18
2 doz. Patty Pans	0.76
Gravy Strainer	0.25
6 Pie Plates	0.60
2 Graters	0.50
1 Nutmeg Grater	0.10
Set of Steel Skewers	0.75
Jelly Mould	0.75
Cullender (large)	0.75
" (small)	0.50
Salt Box	0.50
2 Gridirons (large and small)	1.00
Total	$109.30

EXTRAS.

Hair Broom	$1.75
Feather Duster	1.50
Stair Brush	1.12
Ash Kettle and Sifter	4 50
Garbage Pail	5.00
Batter Kettle	1.50
Enamelled Iron Saucepan	1.50
" " Kettle	2.00
Tinned Iron Saucepan	1.38
" " Kettle	1.50
" " Stewpan	1.75
Knife Washer	1.38
Jelly Strainer	3.00
Plate Warmer (japanned)	6.50
Table Service for Servants	3.62
Knives and Forks "	1.50
Porcelain-lined fire proof Baking Dish, silver plated outside	7.25
Clothes Wringer	8.00
Refrigerator	15.00
Upright Roaster and Jack	16.00

DINING-ROOM, 15 × 18.

2 Scotch Holland Window Shades with tassels, and patent rollers	$3.80
14 yards Satine for curtains for two windows	8.75
2 Window Cornices, walnut and gilt	7.00
30 yards American Ingrain Carpeting at $1.50 per yard	45.00
Walnut Extension Table for 12 persons	14.00
6 Chairs, walnut with cane seats	18.00
Walnut Sideboard	40.00
Water Cooler	3.00
Japanned Tea Tray	1.50
Small Tray for waiter	0.75
Britannia Coffee Pot	2.75
Egg Boiler (wire)	0.75
1 doz. Plated Table Forks	10.00
" " Dessert "	9.00
" " Table Spoons	10.00
" " Dessert "	9.00
" " Tea "	5.00
A Plated Dinner Caster	10.00
1 doz. Rubber-handled Knives	6.00
Carver and Steel	3.50
Set of Palm-leaf Table Mats	1.00
Dinner Bell	0.50
Plated Call Bell	1.50
Plain white French China Dinner Set, 134 pieces	30.00
Plain white French China Tea Set, 44 pieces	7.50
1 doz. Goblets, cut glass	4.00
" Tumblers, pressed glass	1.00
Celery Glass	0.75
2 Preserve Dishes, cut glass, and of different sizes	3.00
China Fruit Basket	1.50
Glass	1.00
Water Pitcher	0.75
Molasses Jug	0.75
1 doz Glass Salt Cellars	0.75
Total	$261.80

EXTRAS.

Solid Silver Table Spoons	$55 to 60
" " " Forks	" " "
" " Dessert "	40 to 45
" " " Spoons	" " "
" " Tea "	24 to 30
English Porcelain Dinner Set, 142 pieces	25.00
English Porcelain Tea Set, 56 pieces	5.25
1 doz. Ivory-handled Knives	7.00
Glass Knife-rests, each,	0.25
Set of Tea Trays	7.50
Plated Breakfast-caster	5.00

NOTE—The plated ware in the above list is of the very best triple plate, and will stand the wear of years. But spoons and forks are sold at lower prices, less heavily plated—quite good articles at two dollars less on each dozen.

The china sets are very full and of fine quality. A greatly inferior kind, less serviceable, and with fewer pieces, can be bought as low as seventeen dollars for a dinner service; and, in English Porcelain, as low as thirteen dollars.

TABLE-LINEN AND TOWELS.

8 yards Linen Damask, for 4 table-cloths	$4.80
2 Bordered Table-cloths, finer Damask, 2½ yards long	9.00
Material for 2 kitchen table-cloths	1.50
2 doz. Plain Napkins	4.00
1½ " Fine "	9.00
2 doz. Towels	6.00
1 " Fine Towels	9.00
6 Towels for servant's room	1.00
8 " " glass and china	1.60
8 Coarser Dish Towels	0.96
Total	$46.86

BED-ROOM, 15 × 18.

2 Window-shades	$3.80
14 yards Chintz for curtains for two windows	4.90
2 Window-cornices, walnut and gilt	6.00
30 yards American Ingrain Carpeting, at $1.50 per yard	45.00
Suit of Cottage Furniture, 10 pieces, with marble-top bureau, and wash-stand	50.00
Springs for Bedstead	5.00
Hair Mattress, (40 lbs.)	28.00
2 Feather Pillows, (4 lbs. each)	8.00
Feather Bolster, 6 lbs.)	6.00
1 pair Blankets	15.00
2 Marseilles Spreads	8.00
3 pairs Cotton Sheets, (9-4 wide)	8.25
" " " Pillow-cases, (5-4 wide)	3.60
3 Cotton Bolster-cases	1.56
White China Toilet Set, (13 pieces)	7.50
Total	$200.61

PARLOR AND SITTING-ROOM COMBINED, 15 × 18.

2 Scotch Holland Window Shades, with tassels and patent rollers	$4.40
14 yards Nottingham Lace, for two windows, with lambrequins of satine, covered with the lace, and cords and tassels	36.00
2 Gilt Window-cornices	10.00
30 yards English Ingrain Carpeting, at $1.75 per yard	52.50
Part of a Suit of Oiled Walnut Furniture, including sofa, large easy-chair, and small easy-chair, covered with woolen rep	84.00
2 Walnut Reception-chairs, straw seats	10.00
Sewing-chair	5.00

Fancy Chair	12.00
Walnut Table, with marble top	16.00
Total	$229.90

HALL AND STAIRWAY.

6 yards Venetian Carpeting for Hall, yard wide, at $2.50 per yard	$15.00
10 yards Venetian Carpeting for Stairway, half yard wide, at $1.25 per yard	12.50
1½ dozen Stair-pads	3.75
1½ dozen Brass Stair-rods	6.75
Hat-stand and Umbrella-rack	10.00
Total	$48.00

SERVANT'S ROOM, 15 × 15.

1 Window Shade and Trimmings	$1.00
25 yards Rag Carpeting	25.00
Small Table	2.00
Looking Glass	1.00
Wash-stand	2.00
Chair	0.75
Rocking-chair	3.00
Single Bedstead	5.00
Springs for Bedstead	3.00
Hair Mattress	10.00
1 pair Blankets	5.50
Colored Cotton Bed-spread	1.75
Feather Pillow, (3 lbs.)	3.00
3 pairs Cotton Sheets, (6-4 wide)	3.39
3 Pillow-cases	1.20
Toilet Set	2.50
Total	$70.09

EXTRAS.

Bureau, with glass	$10.00
Calico Comfortable	2.50

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